

KAISA LANGER

Estonian folklore collections in the context
of Late Stalinist folkloristics



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UNIVERSITY OF TARTU
Press

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This dissertation is accepted for the commencement of the degree of Doctor of
Philosophy in Folkloristics on 12.05.2021 by the Institute of Cultural Research,
University of Tartu.

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Commencement: 27.08.2021 at 16:00

This dissertation was funded by European Social Fund's Doctoral Studies and
Internationalisation Programme DoRa and by the Estonian Graduate School of
Culture Studies and Arts (GSCSA).



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ISSN 1406-7366
ISBN 978-9949-03-634-9 (print)
ISBN 978-9949-03-635-6 (pdf)

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University of Tartu Press
www.tyk.ee

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	6
NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION	7
LIST OF ORIGINAL PUBLICATIONS	8
INTRODUCTION	9
1. How to study the folkloristics of early Soviet Estonia?	12
1.1. Literature review	12
1.2. Why study the history of folkloristics and folklore collections?	14
1.3. Theoretical perspective: Soviet postcolonialism	17
1.4. Sources and methods	19
2. Sovietised folkloristics: New methods, old objects	25
2.1. Conducting research in a Soviet country	25
2.2. Folkloristics in the Soviet Union and Soviet Bloc	28
2.3. Invented and staged folklore in the Soviet Union	36
2.4. Historical context: Sovietising Estonia	41
2.5. Sovietising folkloristics in Estonia	44
2.6. Three institutions collecting and researching folklore	48
2.6.1. The Folklore Department of the State Literary Museum	48
2.6.2. Tartu State University Department of Folklore	50
2.6.3. The Folklore Sector at the Institute of Language and Literature	51
2.7. Valuable folklore: discrepancies between statements and practices ..	53
SUMMARIES OF THE PUBLISHED ARTICLES	61
SUMMARY AND FURTHER RESEARCH PERSPECTIVES	66
REFERENCES	69
SUMMARY IN ESTONIAN	78
PUBLICATIONS	83
CURRICULUM VITAE	179
ELULOOKIRJELDUS	180

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, I would like to thank my supervisor Ergo-Hart Västriik for his guidance through each stage of the process of studying Soviet Estonian folkloristics. I am very grateful for his patience and encouragement and for his thorough art of working with texts.

I am thankful for the vibrant academic environment of the Department of Estonian and Comparative Folklore and for the friendliness of all the people working there who have inspired, helped, and guided me from the very beginning of my studies. I am also thankful for Professor Thomas Höpel and the fellow students at the University of Leipzig for the inspiring discussions. I would like to thank for the editors of the articles for their thought-provoking comments. I would like to acknowledge David Allen for his diligent proof-reading.

My sincere gratitude goes to my family for their support: for Ruprecht for always being there for me and for my daughter Linda for being so patient.

I deeply grateful for the colleagues from the Estonian Folklore Archives for their continuous help and support. All of you have inspired me and helped me to understand the complexity of the archival materials. Especially, I would like to thank Risto Järv for offering me a chance to work at the archives and Mari Sarv for pushing me to explore new fields. Thank you, Liina Saarlo, Janika Oras, and Ave Goršič for the discussions about Soviet folkloristics.

I have been writing this thesis in the time when the funding of Estonian Folklore Archives was uncertain. The institution that already during the Soviet period needed to prove that only the physical care for the collections and helping the archive users is not enough, but documenting and archiving folklore are tasks that need a scholarly view, has to prove this once again. My thesis is dedicated to all the people who work or worked at the Estonian Folklore Archives.

NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION

I have used the Library of Congress system when transliterating Russian names.

Throughout the thesis, I use the contemporary place names rather than the names in their current form.

LIST OF ORIGINAL PUBLICATIONS

Article I

Kulasalu, Kaisa 2017. From the Estonian Folklore Archives to the Folklore Department of the State Literary Museum: Sovietisation of Folkloristics in Late Stalinist Estonia. – *Mapping the History of Folklore Studies: Centres, Borderlands and Shared Spaces*. Edited by Sandis Laime, Dace Bula. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, pp. 132–153.

Article II

Kulasalu, Kaisa 2013. Immoral Obscenity: Censorship of Folklore Manuscript Collections in Late Stalinist Estonia. – *Journal of Ethnology and Folkloristics*, Vol 7 (1), pp. 65–81.

Article III

Langer, Kaisa 2021. Becoming a Folklorist in Early Soviet Estonia: Learning the Rhetoric of Socialist Research. – *Cultural Analysis*, Vol 19 (2), pp. 6–33.

Article IV

Langer, Kaisa 2021. Dealing with Soviet Colonialism: Folklore Studies in Early Soviet Estonia and East Germany. – *Socialist in Form, National in Content: Folklore and Ethnography in the Soviet Western Borderlands* Edited by Toms Kencis. Lanham: Lexington Books (forthcoming).

INTRODUCTION

Although very cold
The winter weather is at times
Our kolkhoz is yet
Fulfilling the logging plan

Soon the hardships will be over
The logging plan fulfilled
Then we can step
Towards a new election!

This is an excerpt from the poem “Logging”, by a 16-year-old Silvia Pöder.¹ The text was archived in the Folklore Department of the Estonian Literary Museum² with her other poems in 1951. What is more, together with folk musicians from her village, she was invited for a recording session in Tartu where sound recordings were made of her reciting her poems about the life and work in the socialist village. In the Stalinist years, miscellaneous materials were archived as folklore in Soviet Estonia. The folklorists struggled to understand the new ways of conducting research and adapting to the Soviet paradigm. But next to poems on Soviet topics, notes from Kolkhoz wall newspapers and factory worker life stories, most of the folklore collected during the Soviet years was not so different from the materials that were archived prior to the occupation.

Estonian history has been rewritten several times in the course of the 20th century. After being part of the Russian Empire for almost two hundred years, Estonia gained independence in 1918. The republic was occupied in 1940–1941 by the Soviet Union, in 1941–1944 by Nazi Germany and from 1944 again by the Soviets. Estonia regained independence in 1991. The ideological changes that came with the Soviet Union shaped the whole of the social structure and therefore understanding the Soviet period is essential to any analysis of Estonian culture. Interest in folklore had developed as part of the national awakening in 19th century Estonia. Collecting and analysing folklore continued through different ideologies because the scope and meaning of folklore offers several possibilities for interpretation. The dissertation describes and analyses the Stalinist period of 1944–1956 as an era of rupture and continuity in the context of Estonian folkloristics, with a focus on folklore collections.

The goal of this dissertation is to show the different aspects of folklore studies in early Soviet Estonia. To fulfil this aim, several research questions were relevant. To start with, it is important to chart the changes in Soviet

¹ KKI 17, 161/2 < Riidaja – Silvia Pöder, 16 a (1951); *Ehk küll on ju väga külm / Mõnikord see talveilm / Siiski ikka me kolhoos / On metsaplaani täitmishoos. // Peagi raskused on võidetud / Metsatööde plaan saab täidetud / Rõõmsalt võisime me astu / Suurtel valimistel vastu!*

² The name of the Estonian Folklore Archives during the Soviet period was the Folklore Department of the State Literary Museum. See also Chapter 2.6.1.

Estonian folkloristics in comparison to the folklore studies before World War Two: what were the new theories, methods, and topics, and what remained the same? What and whom did folklorists study and why? There is a dimension of personal choice: how were folklore students educated in the new paradigm and how did professional folklorists re-evaluate their previous work or censor folklore collections? I also follow institutional changes: how were the tasks of documenting, archiving, and studying folklore divided between different institutions? The thesis contextualises the miscellaneous materials that were archived in the first Soviet years, in addition to looking at how the larger developments in collecting folklore throughout the Soviet period can be explained by the decisions made in the first years after World War Two. Research politics is reflected in different kinds of sources, so the thesis looks at what kind of folklore was presented in publications and introduced to Soviet colleagues. Did it differ from the folklore that was valued by collectors and archive users?

On the eve of World War Two, Estonia was a country with large folklore collections and established folklore institutions. How different were the attempts of Estonian folklorists to adapt to the Soviet system from the similar attempts in other countries that were occupied by the Soviet Union, or were in the Soviet Bloc? The questions of adapting to the methods and aims of Soviet research are also of a methodological and theoretical nature: how should we understand the people's actions during the Stalinist period? How much agency did they have in their decisions?

I argue that archived folklore and fieldwork notes are a source that depicts how insufficiently Soviet commands worked in real-life situations. The central claim of the thesis is that folkloristics in early Soviet Estonia was a hybrid endeavour where possible research directions were chosen to fit both the pre-war understanding of folklore and the principles of Soviet folkloristics. Estonian folklorists learned to successfully imitate a positive tone that depicted Soviet progress in all fields of life when writing about the work done in folklore collecting and research. However, the research practices show that folklorists struggled hard to find the Soviet folklore that was expected from them and to recontextualise the older folklore in a way that it could be presented as an example of class struggle.

The thesis consists of four articles and the introductory chapter in hand. The latter is divided into two main parts. First, I introduce the relevant literature, theoretical and methodological perspective, and the sources. There is an abundance of overviews of the Stalinist period and also about ethnological disciplines in East and Central Europe after World War Two. Discussions of Soviet Estonian folkloristics add another perspective to these studies and are in dialogue with the recent publications about postcolonial approaches in the study of Soviet society. The thesis is based on written sources: archival materials and publications about folklore. These sources cannot reflect all aspects of folklore studies at the time, but they do convey an understanding of the common discourses on folklore and folkloristics.

The second part of the introduction gives a general overview of folklore research in early Soviet Estonia. It introduces the particularities of research politics in the Soviet Union, the general development of folkloristics and the concept of Soviet folklore. A distinct approach to folklore emerged in the Soviet Union during the Stalinist period: folkloristics was to document positive Soviet folklore and publish it to help to build a new society. Previous work was re-evaluated and new studies were based on Marxist-Leninist theory. This approach – Stalinist folkloristics – shaped folklore studies in the early Soviet Estonia and continued to influence the study of folk culture during the period it was occupied by the Soviet Union. After World War Two, the folklorists of the whole of East and Central Europe faced similar challenges and so I briefly compare the development of folkloristics in early Soviet Estonia and East Germany.

The three institutions that collected, archived and studied folklore in early Soviet Estonia are also described in the introduction. To demonstrate how different the approaches to folklore were in various contexts, I compare the resolutions to collect Soviet folklore with the research practices. I highlight the evaluations of folklorists who accepted the materials at the archival collections to the Folklore Department of the State Literary Museum and discuss the research interests of the people who used the folklore collections of the Folklore Department. After the introduction, summaries of the four articles are presented, followed by the full texts of the papers. The thesis ends with a summary of the general conclusions and a discussion of possible topics for further research.

Folklore collections reflect the history of folkloristics, the popular understanding of folklore and the political events of a country. Without a contextual information, the texts sometimes appear to readers to be curiosities. That is why I hope to contextualise the early Soviet period from the perspective of institutions that documented, archived, studied, and published folklore. I intend to create an understanding of the situation in which folklore on Soviet topics was created, and describe the processes by which these materials landed in the archives. In this way it will also be possible to comprehend the developments of Estonian folkloristics in the second half of the 20th century.

1. How to study the folkloristics of early Soviet Estonia?

1.1. Literature review

When I started my PhD studies, there were relatively few publications about the Soviet period in Estonian folkloristics. There were many studies of the interest in folklore in the 19th century, with the beginning of the 20th century also being covered quite well. For example, a reflexive view of the research history was presented in a collection of articles published in 2005 (Kuutma, Jaago 2005), although the texts focused on the period before the Soviet occupation. Naturally, the issues of the Soviet period were covered in overviews of ethnographical disciplines (for example Leete et al. 2008) that characterised the general developments. More specifically, Janika Oras' PhD thesis (2008) discusses the collection and creation practices of the traditional Estonian archaic song tradition *regilaul* in the repertoire of five singers during the Soviet period. Ave Goršič (*nee* Tupits) also covered some of the issues of Soviet folkloristics in her dissertation on the research history of folk medicine (Tupits 2009). Arvo Krikmann described how Finnish and Soviet Estonian folklorists collaborated on the publication about balto-finnic proverb types since early 1960s; among other topics, he discussed the phenomena of Soviet proverbs (Krikmann 2001). Therefore, while there was a general understanding of the most important developments, and some specific issues were addressed, the topic of the Soviet period was rather underrepresented in the history of Estonian folkloristics.

However, in the recent years, several analyses of different topics related to Soviet folklore and folkloristics were written by researchers from the Estonian Folklore Archives. Liina Saarlo has analysed fieldwork diaries (Saarlo 2018a), discussed the depiction of Estonian–Russian relations in post-war folklore (Saarlo 2019), and investigated folk songs (Saarlo 2017a, 2017b), concluding that the Soviet period conserved the trends in folkloristic research that were dominant before the Soviet occupation. Andreas Kalkun and Janika Oras (2019) analysed Soviet improvisations focusing on the Stalinist period. Ave Goršič (2017b) has published an article on discussions about information management in the Folklore Department of the State Literary Museum during the period of mature socialism. She also conducted research on folk belief in Soviet Estonia (Goršič 2018). Several articles discuss the folklore archives' work with correspondents, i.e. people who answered questionnaires or documented folklore on a voluntary basis (Goršič 2017a; Korb 2017). Estonian ethnologists, too, have discussed and are discussing the disciplinary history of their research field, which has been separated from folklore studies since the early 20th century; the conservative influence of the Soviet period was observed here as well (Jääts 2019). The bulk of literature shows the differences between official statements and research practices and introduces the choices made by individuals in a complicated ideological situation in their search for suitable folklore.

In her recent study, Sadhana Naithani (2019) compared developments in the three Baltic countries. At the same time Latvian and Lithuanian researchers have addressed the issues of Soviet folkloristics (for example, Būgienė 2017). The changes in Latvia were especially similar to those of Soviet Estonia (see, for example, Kēncis 2017, 2019; Treija 2017). In Latvia, there were several institutional changes, although the archival organisation and collective of employees at the Archives of Latvian Folklore remained relatively stable. There were also some plans to publish Soviet folklore, but this was not done as comprehensively as had been planned, for example a proposed three-volume publication was never compiled (Kēncis 2019: 213–217). The comparison with the neighbouring countries shows that there were similar struggles to maintain high standards of research while at the same time adapting to the new political understanding of people and culture.

The Baltic states were not usually included in overviews of Central European ethnology (for example, Hann et al. 2005), because they were parts of the Soviet Union. However, I argue that the cultural histories of the Baltics and Central Europe are similar enough to be discussed together. The Baltics were a special case for the Soviet Union with their development standing between the ‘old Soviet Union’, meaning the republics that were part of the Soviet Union before World War Two, and Soviet-influenced Eastern Europe. Russian historian Jelena Zubkova has discussed that the sovietisation of the Baltics could have worked as a model for sovietising Eastern Europe with similar dynamics. Relations between Moscow and the Baltics was not just an internal Soviet issue, it was also part of the widening of Soviet influence in post-war Europe. (Zubkova 2007: 185)

For example, the timeline of Estonian history is not that different from many Eastern European countries: after being part of a large empire until the First World War, there had been around two decades as an independent state with all its structures. After the Nazi occupation the Second World War, the Soviet period lasted until the early 1990s. Understanding the disciplinary history is important for the national research community, with the particularities of historical developments most relevant to those who work in the same field and use archival collections. But at the same time, folkloristics has also been and is a comparative discipline that studies connections and similarities. Comparisons should not only be made in tale type catalogues and indexes, the history of the discipline in different areas should also be analysed. The similarities and differences between these developments help us understand the position of the field in different countries, and therefore pave way for possible collaboration in the future.

For comparisons with other East and Central European countries, I have used several publications in English and German, but due to linguistic restrictions many potentially important publications were out of my reach. The comparative aspect is important, because just as there are different national literatures, there are also national varieties of anthropology (Hofer 1996: 94), ethnology, folkloristics and other research fields. Thomas K. Schippers (1996:

108) has described latent ethnicity in research. This means that different habits, feelings, and cultural traditions influence research, ethnicity being one of them. It is impossible for a researcher to be neutral, so an awareness of one's position as a researcher and a reflexive approach are needed. Positioning oneself in the research field also means knowing the research history of a certain region. Regional differences in the development of folkloristics have been researched quite thoroughly (for example, Ó Giolláin 2000). At the same time, developments after Second World War are discussed less often (for example, Hann et al. 2005), especially on a larger, theoretical scale.

1.2. Why study the history of folkloristics and folklore collections?

This dissertation discusses folklore and working practices folklorists in the years after World War Two. I claim that this topic still has relevance in the contemporary folklore research as it contextualizes materials that formed the discipline of folkloristics in Estonia. Comprehending how disciplinary histories have evolved helps us understand the current research topics and the position of the discipline in society. Especially in the humanities, research history is bound to developments in society, something that folkloristics was a good example of from the very beginning. Practicing folklorists are aware of the large ideological load that the discipline has, and folkloristics has been shaped by doubts about its disciplinary boundaries (Ó Giolláin 2000: 2). Helge Gerndt (2015: 26–27) has listed reasons for the need for disciplinary history: it shows the boundaries, opportunities and risks of the discipline, the background to the current theories and methods and creates a reflective perspective, showing what kinds of question are not asked. Paying attention to these issues is also the goal of this dissertation.

As Dan Ben-Amos stated in 1973, writing the history of folkloristics seems like one of the many outdated collective actions that the discipline is criticised for. But both for folklore studies and the history of the discipline, mere chronicle writing should be avoided. Indexing and systematising data helped folkloristics become an independent field, although without systematic analysis it is more like a craft. (Ben-Amos 1973: 114–115) Whereas the history of many other disciplines is written by historians, folklorists have always written their own disciplinary histories. Therefore, the distance between the actors in the field and those who describe them is not wide. Personal connections could affect the writing, while proximity in general could lead to the histories leaving out larger patterns. Most of the histories of folkloristics have been written from a national viewpoint. As folklore studies have often concentrated on local issues, this kind of historiography is a natural choice, although many aspects remain unstudied, such as the creation of an international research community, the transformation of ideas and methods, etc. (Schmoll 2015: 35–37)

Since the very beginning, folklore studies have always been socio-politically engaged. Many of the first larger folklore collections were the results of socio-political aspirations (Bendix 2002: 111), and the same is true of folklore collections in Estonia. Dan Ben-Amos has claimed that folklore, perhaps to a greater extent than any other discipline in the humanities and social sciences, is inter-related with non-academic trends of thought and action (Ben-Amos 1973: 120). The national differences in the disciplinary goals and practices are related to the general cultural development of a state. According to Ó Giolláin (2000: 49), the countries with old traditions of high culture have seen folklore as a regional interest, while at the same time a gaze outside and ethnographic research was needed in these colonial countries.

There are, therefore, several reasons to write a disciplinary history. Firstly, this would be a device to show how politics and folkloristics were intertwined. As Andreas Kalkun notes, it is a fact that there are connections between Estonian folkloristics and politics, but these connections are not always straightforward or in the areas where one might expect them (Kalkun 2011: 12). Discussing the political dimension of folklore studies in Soviet Estonia helps us see the methods researchers used to find their own courses of action in a complicated political situation. At the same time, a historical overview also one way to reflect on the disciplinary practices. Writing a disciplinary history is needed, according to Regina Bendix, to keep in mind that “knowledge is made, not found, and that knowledge, once made, is put to use beyond the small community of knowledge-making specialists.” (Bendix 1997: 220)

The focus of my work is on archival materials, in which knowledge is not just accumulated in the pages of collections and systems of finding information, but is also actively constructed in the process of archiving. In a poststructuralist view, archives are not just a collection of texts, but a system of forming statements – the relations and institutions that make it possible to state something. Archives can be seen as a what is important and not important in a given culture (Foucault 1972: 128–129) The materials of the folklore archives reflect only a fraction of the vernacular culture of the time they document (cf. Beyer 2011), as well as reflecting the different goals of collectors and archivists. An archive, especially a folklore archive, is never a clear mirror to society, rather it reflects the values of the people who make decisions about what to preserve, not the reality itself.

Folklore archives are a specific form of archive and can have different names, combining terms like folklore, folklife, ethnography, oral history, cultural heritage. There are several definitions of folklore archives. For the following, I use the definition by Maryna Chernyavska: “Folklore archives are collections of unpublished research materials created during fieldwork (including fieldwork in the digital world), through correspondence or in cooperation with private collectors in order to document cultural expressions; and institutions whose main goal is to collect, preserve and provide public access to such materials.” (Chernyavska 2018: 29) Not every collection of texts forms an archive, rather, an archive is a collection that is organised in a certain way. In order to be an

archive, a collection also needs a person who organises the incoming material and communicates with users of the archive. (Bendix 2015: 150)

Folklore archives have been established separately to historical archives. Collections of records that were created, managed, and used for government purposes might also include as ethnographic materials, but the folklore archives were created specifically to document unofficial everyday culture, with collections of the 19th century mainly institutionalised in the first half of 20th century. (Chernyavska 2018: 24) Therefore, folklore archives are better contextualised within folkloristics, not in the broader history of the archival profession. However, I will use some comparisons with the archival practices of archives of historical records in the early Soviet period in Estonia to show the general context of dealing with records of (cultural) history in the newly sovietised country (see Article II). It should also be noted that in the last decades, archival theories have influenced record keeping in the folklore archives, in addition to which the historical and government archives created new insights from cultural archives. (Kolovos 2004: 24–25; Chernyavska 2018: 36–37) Whereas the performative turn of the 1960s saw a reduction in the importance of folklore archives in favour of the discipline of folkloristics in the USA and Western Europe (Kolovos 2004: 23), in the Soviet Union no such turn took place. Archives remained a central source of information in folkloristic research.

Archive texts could be seen as dead or context-less and the corpus of texts thin (for example, Honko 2000). But a common trait of folkloristic archive materials is that someone wanted to preserve specifically these things. (Järv 2005: 37) Therefore, the materials can never be studied *per se* but always within the context of their creation and preservation. It is not possible to know the performance context of the archival texts from the 1940–1950s, and it could even be argued that describing the context might lead to false objectivity (Bauman, Briggs 1990). However, knowing about the situation that led to the creation of the texts that are stored in the archive is a chance to understand these texts better, even if complete understanding of these materials is never possible.

A researcher of the Soviet period has the task to convey the understanding of what it was like to live at this time (Hann 1993: 9). An overview of folkloristic practices in early Soviet Estonia would help to understand the folklorists of the time and the choices they made. It would give context to the research papers, folklore text publications and folklore collections of the time and in this way give an insight into the disciplinary developments that shaped Estonian folkloristics throughout the Soviet period and beyond.

1.3. Theoretical perspective: Soviet postcolonialism

Two research paradigms, ‘totalitarian’ and ‘revisionist’, are common in Soviet studies.³ According to the totalitarian approach the Soviet Union, especially under Stalin’s rule, controlled all aspects of its citizens’ lives. This view was prevalent until the 1950s, when a new generation of scholars expressed doubts about the totalitarianism approach, proposing instead a new approach that later became known as revisionism. Revisionists showed the weakness of claims about overreaching government control, saying instead that in most cases the control of the state was rather weak and different groups interacted with the regime or even supported it. Both points of view were rooted in the socio-political context of the time: totalitarianism as a central concept was a product of the Cold War; revisionism began to prevail during the Vietnam War and the period when Marxism and left-wing ideology became generally more popular in the West. The next generation of researchers – post-revisionists – in the 1990s agreed with some of the claims of the revisionists, but are generally critical towards both totalitarianism and revisionism. Another approach, often used by countries that bordered or were occupied by the Soviet Union, is postcolonialism, which accentuates the imperial matrix of power and tries to understand the complex positions that the various actors in Soviet ideology had. Therefore, the question of how overwhelming the ideology was and how the balance between collaboration and resistance to the Soviet Union was realised is less important than an attempt to understand the particularities of the choices people made when faced with unequal ideological and political situations.

In my first articles, I also use the concept of totalitarianism. The theory of a political system that controls all aspects of life was less appropriate during mature socialism, but the Stalinist years saw control over many aspects of public and private life. Political repression and the impossibility of opposing the system without being prosecuted characterised the Stalinist period. The concept of totalitarianism is illuminating when used to analyse the situation in comparison to the previous democratic society. The state controlled the economy and media, and the Communist Party was the authority not only in political issues, but in all aspects of life. It is important to highlight these characteristics of the Stalinist years to understand the complexities of the situation in which people in early Soviet Estonia found themselves. However, the totalitarian control was an ideal that never covered all aspects of life; especially in private life people were always able to perform some acts of freedom. It was also possible to use the Soviet system to follow one’s private goals, and here I find postcolonial theory a fruitful tool with which to analyse the mechanisms of coping with the Soviet system.

The postcolonial perspective has been used to understand developments in the post-socialist countries for several decades (see Moore 2001), yet, it remains

³ The discussions about totalitarianism and revisionism are only briefly addressed here. For a thorough overview, see for example Edele 2020, Fitzpatrick 2007.

controversial. Postcolonial writings mainly discussed how capitalist countries politically and culturally dominated non-capitalist areas, although the difference between being a socialist country and being an occupied capitalist country are very different. What is more, instead of the ‘civilised’ coloniser and the ‘barbaric’ colonised, in the Baltics the native populations saw themselves as the carriers of Western values and their occupiers as barbaric.

Concepts from the postcolonialism toolkit, such as hybridity, mimicry, and othering illuminate complex power relations in a nuanced way. These concepts are used internationally and therefore offer a better opportunity for researchers to understand and compare developments than if they lacked this common conceptual background; this perspective also highlights human agency and so is a good way out of the binary opposition of collaboration and resistance.

However, postcolonial theories also sometimes tend to essentialise and generalise cultural concepts leading to the danger of finding traces of a colonial mentality just because one expects to find them, rather than letting oneself as a researcher to be carried by the materials. (Albrecht 2018: 12) And naturally, postcolonialism is no unified research field, rather it is a bundle of approaches used in very different contexts, originally developed to analyse the effect of European colonisation on non-Western societies. However, these theories have been used for other constellations, for example for Ottoman colonialism or the analysis of post-Soviet societies. The multidirectional postcolonial framework offers a new framework of thinking, where the division of the world to capitalist West and non-capitalist areas colonised by the West is not enough. (Ibid.: 185–186)

Postcolonial theories are well suited to describing people’s everyday experiences and their hybrid ways of existing, creating and perceiving discourse. However, the perspective is also good for studying institutional change, power relations, and the dynamics between centre and periphery. The possibility to discover the look for structural relationships between coloniser and colonised opens perspectives that would be hidden to some other form of analysis. (Kalnačs 2019: 257) Epp Annus suggests that one should “understand ‘colonizer’ and ‘colonized’ as structural positions that refer to the subject’s location within the colonial matrix of power” and claims that positions of the coloniser and the colonised might be active in one situation but have no meaning in another. (Annus 2019: 249)

However, the concept of hybridity is illuminating when understanding research in Soviet Estonia. Hybridity, like many other postcolonial concepts, was borrowed from biology. Hybridity here means a mixture of two species. There was no pure Estonian folkloristics that could be mixed with pure Soviet research, although there were ideas about folklore that had been used in pre-war Estonia. And then there were the folkloristic analyses of Soviet folklore, contemporary and positive about Soviet developments. These two paradigms, the latter being needed mainly because of political pressure, melted into a hybrid way of understanding folk culture, where the topics and methods of research were chosen to fit both approaches.

Researchers in early Soviet Estonia needed to find a balance between the new theories that they gradually learned about, and the folkloristics they had come to appreciate during the pre-Soviet period. It seems that students at Tartu State University were taught the older research methods (such as the historical-geographical method) and an appreciation of the classical genres of folklore rather than Soviet folklore. The question of referencing Soviet (research) classics would only take place on a superficial level. (See Article III) Therefore, the hybrid coexistence of two research paradigms continued throughout the Soviet period. Hybridity is an excellent concept with which to understand this new way of researching folklore: having traits of both interwar Estonian folkloristics and Soviet folklore studies, it was a unique new way of conducting research. Liina Saarlo claims that the Soviet period conserved Estonian folkloristics (Saarlo 2018b) and I support this claim: folklorists were careful in taking risks in their research. When possible, they would avoid overly Soviet approaches finding topics and methods that would not only match Soviet concepts, but would also fit with the understanding of folklore as a national concept, as was the approach in interwar Estonia. As typical to the colonial power system, the hybrid situation was based on unequal power relations. On the one hand, the interest in conducting research that would also be valued according to pre-war research standards was something intrinsic to several generations of folklorists. On the other hand, using the Soviet research paradigm was necessary to avoid repression on the personal level, continue the existence of the discipline and institutions, and maintain or improve one's career position.

1.4. Sources and methods

The various written sources I used to study folkloristics in post-war Estonia are stored in different institutions. Firstly, documents about the Institute of Language and Literature and the Tartu State University are in the National Archives of Estonia, while documents about the Folklore Department of the State Literary Museum are in the archive of the Estonian Literary Museum. The folklore collections of these three institutions are now in the Estonian Folklore Archives.

The folklore collections are the main sources for research on early Stalinist folkloristics in Estonia. Whereas the ideals of folklore collecting were discussed in meetings and presented in reports, the reality of what was collected, and how, is reflected in the collections. In addition to folklore texts, collector field notes represent the collecting situations as well as the ways folklorists or students applied theoretical concepts in real life. Therefore, the folklore collections and indexes of the Estonian Folklore Archives (EFA) are my primary set of sources. The institutional and larger personal folklore collections in Estonia are stored in the EFA.

The manuscript folklore collections of the EFA mainly consist of numbered pieces of oral folklore or descriptions of performances, the direct interview context is not present in the older collections, although the sociocultural and

performance context is often brought up in the letters of volunteer collectors or in the field diaries of folklorists. These, too, are sources for my research. Among the materials I used, there were censored items cut out of the original manuscripts (see Article II). During the Soviet period, not all materials that the volunteer correspondents sent to the Folklore Department were incorporated in the archives. The omitted texts were not seen as folklore or were not ideologically suitable. These unarchived materials formed another set of sources: materials that the collectors saw as folkloric, but where the archivists disagreed. Censorship is an important keyword in discussing the folkloristics of the Soviet period. It not only determined what was published but also gave context to the whole process of knowledge production and reception. Studying only the censored texts would not give a full understanding of Estonian culture in this period, where censorship played an important role. The whole process of creating texts should be a part of the research. (Veidemann 2000: 22–23)

The archived materials were either collected by volunteer correspondents or by folklorists who conducted interviews either individually or, after 1948, often as members of collective expeditions. A typical expedition took place in a rural area. A group of folklorists, sometimes from several institutions, stayed in one place and interviewed people alone or in small groups. The folklore was generally documented in written form. From the mid-1950s magnet tape recorders became more common (see Oras 2008: 74–86) although they were mainly used for recording musical forms. During the expeditions, working meetings were held to discuss progress. The goals of the expeditions were quite wide and many genres and topics were covered.

Archived folklore mainly consisted of oral tradition. When correspondents answered questionnaires or sent their own notes, they were strongly encouraged to stick to the orally transmitted texts. Sporadically, written folklore for example from wall newspapers was also documented in the Soviet period and incorporated in the archives. During the Stalinist period when the definition of folklore was wider, authored written texts, mainly poems but also short stories and dramas were archived. Some official events were visited by folklorists who tried to find material worthy of documenting during the amateur arts activities inspections, regional singing festivals or other similar events. In addition to folklore of different genres, also texts that would now be characterised as oral history archived, although these materials were generally not researched, just archived as contextual information. The variety of methods and goals of documenting folklore resulted in a miscellaneous collection of texts being archived in the folklore collections of early Soviet Estonia.

The second set of sources are the documents of the institutions related to folklore collecting: transcripts of meetings, working plans and reports made by people working at the Folklore Department of the State Literary Museum, the Institute of Language and Literature and Tartu State University are held by the Estonian Literary Museum, various collections of the National Archives of Estonia and the archives of the Estonian Academy of Sciences. There is a variety of documents in these archives. A fruitful source for research are the

meeting protocols of the institutions that dealt with folklore. The protocols of different institution departments show more precisely how the instructions and suggestions were carried out. Discussions of research manuscripts show what values were expected of Soviet publications and how carefully the statements were constructed. The plans and reports reflect the ideals of working, while the budget plans show what was prioritised. Working plans and reports were expected from staff members, departments, and institutions. As the theoretical perspectives changed, the plans were adjusted. For example, when the linguistic theories of Nikolai Marr fell into disfavour in 1950, everything that resembled his theories had to be removed from research papers and plans.

The protocols, directions and other preserved documents that represent history as it was supposed to be kept for future generations are not neutral sources of historical facts. The lack of data does not seem to be a problem at first glance as there are many protocols, orders, memos, plans and reports. But the facts themselves are not informative enough: it is possible to gather a lot of material without always gaining the full picture of the mentality of the time. (Hion 2002: 87–88) However, the abundance of different kinds of material helps to show the patterns in the materials and the discourse they create. Methodologically, I have combined close reading of archive materials with some statistical analysis.

When I have introduced the topic of censored folklore materials of the Estonian Folklore Archives, people have often asked why the pieces were not destroyed, instead being carefully stored in another archive. There is no one answer to that question, but I would suggest that the Soviet system gathered information in case it should be needed. Instead of denying previous cultural development, it was rather reconceptualised to fit the new paradigm. This applies not only to folklore collections, but also folkloristics as a discipline.

The third set of sources are publications about folklore. They include research articles, conference publications, chapters in books, newspaper stories for wider audiences, textbooks for students and schools. This material shows what aspects of folklore and folkloristics were communicated actively, what messages were addressed to fellow folklorists and what to wider audiences, what was collected and studied, and why. In comparison to the other fields of folkloristic work, in the Stalinist years publishing folklore texts or research articles was a less intensive part of folkloristic work when compared to documenting and archiving folklore or teaching. There were not many publishing possibilities for research articles, and work on several larger publications, such as literature textbooks in which folklore and folkloristics were incorporated, took many years of heated debate before publication.

To gain an overview of folkloristic publications in Soviet Estonia in the post-war years, I used the category ‘folklore’ in the published national bibliography⁴ for the years 1945–1960. Less than 30 texts per year were published in the first ten years after World War Two with, for example, only two texts published in 1952. From 1955, however, the number of published texts increased with most

⁴ National bibliography lists all the publications in a country in a certain time frame.

of the articles published in periodicals. In addition to published folklore texts, calls for folklore collecting, overviews of expeditions and conferences, and some theoretical discussions were published. A significant number of publications in the post-war years were addressed to a nationwide audience. At this time, around one third of the works published by folklorists were printed in national newspapers such as *Rahva Hää*⁵ or *Sirp ja Vasar*. At the ideologically complicated beginning of the 1950s, around half of the publishing activity was directed at such a wide audience, although the amount had lessened significantly by the end of the decade. This can be explained by the new publishing possibilities: the journal *Keel ja Kirjandus* (*Language and Literature*)⁶ was founded in 1958, and several collections of articles were also published in these years. Before the research journal was established, there just were fewer possibilities to address the research community. However, the articles in national newspapers about contemporary folklore (for example Garšnek 1952, Kaas-aegse 1951) or collections of Russian folklore (for example *Vene rahvalaulude* 1954) helped to communicate new understandings of folklore, for example, its contemporary nature, improvisations, eastern connections.

Some folklore text publications were also planned and published in these years. In 1951, folklorists from the State Literary Museum and the Institute of Language and Literature had a joint meeting to discuss the folklore collecting at both institutions. The discussions showed that the amount of Soviet folklore in the archives was not enough for a source publication or even to print in newspapers.⁷ The folklore text publications of the 1950s (for example, Normann 1955, Normann, Lätt 1955) generally presented classical genres of folklore, not contemporary Soviet folklore. There were many reasons for this. To start with, there already were large numbers of unpublished texts from the late 19th and early 20th centuries in the archives. These large collections of Estonian folklore could be made accessible to a wider group of users through publication. The nature of the existing collections dictated the content of the source publications. At the same time, publishing older material was a way of depicting lost Estonian culture, which evoked nostalgic and patriotic feelings. In folklore publications, these feelings could be safely channelled through a cultural form that the government favoured.

Reconceptualising the past of folklore and literature studies was a central goal of larger publications following World War Two. Already in the spring semester of 1945, Central Committee of the Estonian Communist Party gave the researchers at the Tartu State University the task of preparing a five-volume overview of Estonian literature, with the first volume supposedly giving an overview of Estonian folklore. (Laugaste 1983: 106) As early as 1946 Eduard

⁵ The official daily newspaper of the Communist Party of Estonia.

⁶ While during the Republic of Estonia period the journals *Eesti Kirjandus* (*Estonian Literature*) and *Eesti Keel* (*Estonian Language*) were published, from 1941 there was no research journal dedicated to language, literature or folklore until *Keel ja Kirjandus* was founded in 1958.

⁷ RA, ERA.R-2345.1.91, pag 11.

Laugaste's *Eesti kirjanduse ajalugu I. Eesti rahvaluule* (*The History of Estonian Literature I: Estonian Folklore*) was published as a course book (Laugaste 1946). Although some quotes from Marxist-Leninist classics were included, the overall tone of the textbook was rather neutral. The book was criticised as bourgeois-nationalist (Sõgel 1954) in the early 1950s leading to a new textbook, the course book *Eesti kirjanduse ajalugu* (*The History of Estonian Literature*), being published in 1953 (Sõgel 1953). The book was widely discussed as the content of the new publication was hoped to solve problems in folklore and literature research. (Ahven 2007: 143) However, it was the chapters about folklore that were most heavily criticised. Newspaper reviews claimed that *The History of Estonian Literature* ignored collective, traditional, and improvisational aspects of folklore (Kolk 1954, Tuuling 1954). Several discussion meetings followed. A new, thoroughly edited, version was prepared in 1955 and published in three volumes in 1956–1957 (Sõgel 1956a, Sõgel 1956b, Sõgel 1957). In the new edition, there was less Marxist vocabulary, no quotes by Stalin, no vulgar sociological approach, and more exact terminology. (Hennoste 2010: 145) The chapter on Soviet folklore had been left out and Soviet folk songs were presented only in small print. (Ahven 2007: 192) This textbook reflected the changing understanding of the meaning of folklore in Soviet Estonia and the need to adapt to everchanging rules.

Folklore materials, archival documents and publications allow the reader to understand what was documented, valued and disseminated as folklore. The historical context of the sources means that one needs to be cautious in one's interpretation. It is impossible for me to know how the meetings of folklorists and other researchers really took place, what was actually told to folklore collectors, who decided not to archive certain materials, etc. Eeva Ahven, author of the chronicle of the Institute of Language and Literature (Ahven 2007), had concerns about the motivations of the actors reflected in the dry documents that she was using, but concluded that in the case of the Institute of Language and Literature the archival material showed how the Institute resisted ideological pressure and became a research institution rather than an ideological one. (Ahven 2007: 5–6)

Similarly, my goal is not to show the historical truth, *wie es eigentlich gewesen ist*, but to present the discourse that was being created through the various documents. Although I have practiced the central historical method of source criticism to establish the credibility of the documents used, the contradictory sources are not less interesting for the type of research I conducted. On the contrary, the discrepancies show the different discourses that the different types of text were created for. The discussion protocols, field notes, presentation texts and articles only reflect the part of historical reality that was selected for preservation. It is impossible to know exactly how the events took place or what was discussed, let alone what was thought. But the materials allow us to see what statements were documented as suitable to be presented to others at the time or to be preserved in the archives for future generations. And more importantly, the dialogue of different sources allows us to compare how dis-

courses and practices are connected. I compare research practices with published texts, i.e. fieldwork diaries, work plans and discussion protocols with newspaper articles and research papers. That this is a fruitful approach in Soviet studies is shown by Dana Prescott Howell (1992: 25), who has described the development of Soviet folkloristics and concluded that the manifold interests and directions were as multi-faceted as the published statements.

When studying the history of folkloristics, the methodology for research comes from the field of history rather than from folkloristics or ethnology. One of the main research methods has been comparison, and here I use the methods of historical comparative research. Not only did I compare the sources, but also the development of folklore studies in different countries such as Soviet Estonia and East Germany. A synchronous comparison of the two countries, one on the western border of the Soviet Union, the other in the western part of the Soviet Bloc, shows the similarities in the research politics and social relevance of folklore studies. A comparative history of societies with similar cultural conditions raises awareness of the different models of individual choice made in this situation, i.e. what was broadly the same and what was distinctive (Cohen, O'Connor 2004: xi). To show the developments in folklore collecting and archival work, I have also used quantitative methods. A statistical overview helps us understand the patterns that might not be so clearly seen through a close reading of archival materials.

The reflexive approach to all parts of research is not only a central tool in anthropology, but also has become more common in the overviews of contemporary history. My interest in Soviet folkloristics arose when I worked in the Estonian Folklore Archives. I participated in several projects that offered the chance to get to know the archival system and the diversity of archived materials. For my MA thesis I studied Soviet censorship in the archives and from there a deeper interest in Soviet folkloristics began. My position as a researcher has both advantages and disadvantages in working with the questions of Soviet Estonia. Born in 1988, my personal memories of the Soviet period are more than vague. As a young scholar I had no personal experiences of collection practices, archiving, analysing, or teaching folklore in Soviet Estonia. I am also too young to have taken the introductory folkloristics course read by Eduard Laugaste, who educated future folklorists in Estonia in the 1944–1991 period, or even to have used his textbook as much more than an historical example. This means that my data is not gathered first-hand and I rely on the archive material. Without the experience of living in Soviet Estonia, I might overlook some details that are self-evident for people who studied and worked in Estonia before 1991. But my youth also means that in describing the past I am less affected by the personal relations between actors.

2. Sovietised folkloristics: New methods, old objects

2.1. Conducting research in a Soviet country

Conducting research in a totalitarian state raises several theoretical and methodological questions. Were the researchers victims of the political system or active agents of the same system? How did they adapt to the ideological changes? In the research on the history of certain disciplines or the general research policies in the Soviet Union, scholars emphasise the cooperative nature of research: researchers profited from political decisions and politics profited from the research. I will give an overview of the development of research politics in the early Soviet Union.

Ulla Johansen has noted that researchers within the totalitarian system could either profit from collaborating with the new ideology and advance, or turn away from the political system and face repressions. However, most scholars chose a compromise between these two extremes, although the intensity of working with or against the new ideology varied. (Johansen 1995: 182) There are several overviews of the interwoven nature of research and ideology⁸ that propose that this interaction between research and ideology was unavoidable in most of the work published at this time. There can be no ‘pure’ research that stands outside the social and political reality of the time in which the research was conducted. Not labelling the researchers as victims of the system or heroes of resistance does not mean that their actions should be condemned. Without doubt, working under ideological constraints and fear of repression was a hard task. If I point out that the researchers could follow their personal or research interests, this does not entail judging the actors in the field. At the same time, it should be noted that the developments in the field are a set of decisions made by humans: science is a human activity and should be seen as such, not as an autonomous entity (Rabkin, Mirskaya 2003: 20). Folkloristics is an activity carried out by folklorists – actors who had different reasons to adapt to new ways of conducting research.

As Katherine Verdery emphasises, developments in research in the Soviet context were not a fight between government ideologists and dissidents. It was rather a “contest between fractions of the cultural elite, differentially empowered within a system of domination that requires and supports the production of culture while allowing influence to only some of its producers.” (Verdery 1991: 92) Instead of claiming that politics misuses research one can also see that the initiative for cooperation often comes from researchers. According to Mitchell Ash (2002: 32–33), changes in research are the changes in restructuring resources, and not only financial, but also cognitive, institutional, and rhetorical. Researchers are able to use political resources in achieving their goals just as politicians do.

⁸ For general overview see, for example, Josephson 2005, Walker 2003.

That was also true of the Soviet regime. Despite the states huge control mechanisms researchers in the Soviet Union were still able to “avoid, elude, and exploit” the system. The state gave resources and prestige, researchers gave expertise and legitimisation of the political situation. (Krementsov 1997: 4) At the same time, the power matrix was complicated for all the parties. Philosophical ideas, political power and scientific arguments were so intertwined that it was difficult for the participants to orient themselves. (Pollock 2006: 13–14) The complicated relationship between knowledge and power had already been established during the Tsarist period and remained a problem because of the state’s efforts to modernise while at the same time retain sole authority. (Graham 1993: 157)

In the first years after the 1917 revolution, research did not differ much from pre-Soviet practices. The government needed research for military purposes and so even scientists with unsuitable political backgrounds were used. During the New Economic Policy or NEP in the 1920s, pre-revolutionary researchers collaborated with the new political system, even if they did not agree with the new ideology. Bigger changes in research politics took place in the 1928–1931 period of cultural revolution. These were the years in which Stalin gained total control, but also during which several agents felt that the Soviet project was not yet functioning correctly and that radical change was needed. (Graham 1993: 87–94) At the beginning of the 1930s, research plans were mainly formal documents that documented budgets and staff, with the content of the research playing only a marginal role. But from the middle of the decade the direction of the research became an important part of the plans. These plans and the reports they generated were the main information sources on the research institutions and were used to exercise a control over these institutions until end of the Soviet period. (Krementsov 1997: 42–44)

As with the Soviet economy research was organised into five-year plans. There were also plans for shorter periods, plans for institutions, and plans for individual researchers. When there were new campaigns, working plans had to be changed. Often, ‘in light of the new theory’ or other buzzwords were added without significantly changing anything. These campaigns also presented career advancement possibilities for some researchers. It was impossible to ignore the campaigns, because not giving an opinion was seen as supporting unsuitable concepts. (Krementsov 1997: 246–258) Therefore, all research was subject to influence from political change. At the same time, the foundation of all research was seen in Marxism–Leninism. No earlier revolution had the epistemological and cognitive system that Marxism had, which could be applied to every field of life. (Graham 1993: 99) However, Stalinist dogma damaged the creative possibilities of using Marxism. (Ibid.: 117) Research papers included references to Marxist–Leninist classics, and when there were no suitable quotations from Marx, Engels or Lenin, the founding fathers of the discipline were used instead. (Krementsov 1997: 50–51) With suitable political statements and citations, scholars showed how they and their field were important to the Soviet Union, as well as fending off potential persecution. Francine Hirsch states that using

official Soviet language and interacting with the Soviet institutions strengthened the political system. (Hirsch 2005: 15) Research is always a political act, especially in a totalitarian system.

The methods that researchers from the Baltic states and East Central Europe used to continue their work in the Soviet Union or in the Soviet sphere of influence can be analysed from the postcolonial perspective. On a superficial level, these researchers used the new parlance, learned to quote the right sources and reevaluate their work in the light of new directions in politics, mimicking their Soviet colleagues in order to fit into the new system. At the same time, the ideological situation also brought fundamental changes in research methods and topics to many disciplines. Especially in the humanities, research was often a balancing act between the everchanging ideological statements and the pre-Soviet values that some researchers held. A new hybrid way of studying culture that was a mixture of different values, was born.

The success of a discipline in the Soviet Union depended on its general position in the Stalinist system – for example, genetics was problematic as it was a small discipline and had no military output, in contrast to physics, which thrived due to the Cold War. Scientific issues were not interesting for the party *per se*, rather interest was motivated from the outside through the hierarchy of priorities. (Krementsov 1997: 281–282) Research in fields favoured by the state was well-funded in the Soviet Union and carried high social prestige. Scholars mainly worked in research institutes rather than universities and became a form of civil servant with only incidental teaching obligations. (Kojevnikov 2008: 120–122) Depending on the field of study, researchers were more or less well placed in the Soviet system. While fields like sociology were banned altogether, most other disciplines were able to continue their existence after researchers had reevaluated their work according to the political situation.

The content and purposes of memory institutions were also re-evaluated and re-established. As Jaques Derrida has claimed, there can be no proper political control without control over archives and memory (1996: 4). Control of texts shapes behaviours and discourses. According to Soviet ideas, the distance between a text and reality was very short. The texts represented reality, while at the same time their content was seen as something that would shape reality (Lõhmus 2002: 18). The main arguments behind censoring the collections of memory institutions could be described as follows: as the purpose of archives is to recreate the past, changing the organisation of memory institutions changes the ways people relate to the past. There will be people who can only use literary sources to study the past and so their view of the past will be determined by these sources. Shaping the sources shapes the view of the past, any lack of oral history materials will therefore shape the view of history that outsiders have. If they have access only to certain groups of sources, then this will create a discourse that is likely to be in accordance with ideology.

Instead of the academic freedom in the Republic of Estonia, in the early Soviet Estonia scholars were bound to political restrictions in choosing their research topics, teaching, and publishing their ideas. They needed to prove that

their research is relevant in the new political situation in order to not only to continue their careers, but also to ensure that the research traditions and skills will not be lost in the times of political ruptures. By conducting their research in the Soviet Estonia, their work legitimized the new political system: researchers adapted to the ideological situation, used the rhetorics that was expected of them, studied topics that fitted to the five-year plans, and critically reevaluated their previous work.

2.2. Folkloristics in the Soviet Union and Soviet Bloc

In early Soviet Russia, folkloristics as a discipline flourished with different research trends coexisting. When the Stalinist period began in the late 1920s, the government started to control folkloristics more strictly as folklore was seen as a tool for building a socialist society. During these years, all fields of research were more strictly controlled than in the previous decade. In 1934, Maxim Gorki gave a speech at the All-Union Congress of Socialist Writers in which he stressed his optimism in folklore and its value for studying social relations (Gorky 1977). Folklore collecting was encouraged and new, Soviet, topics such as the party leaders, revolutions, workers, and class struggles appeared, much of this material pseudo-folkloristic in nature (Oinas 1973: 45–49, see also Miller 1990).

The following brief overview of the main research topics and developments in Soviet folkloristics until the end of Stalinist period is intended as an introduction to the intellectual context in which Estonian folklorists unexpectedly landed in the Stalinist years. Before the Soviet occupation, Soviet approaches to folklore did not have a direct influence on Estonian folklore studies. This changed with the beginning of the occupation when the scholars needed to get acquainted to the Soviet ways of studying folk culture – and often also to Russian language. In the next pages, I will outline the central characteristics of the late Stalinist folklore studies and show how these approaches developed in the context of knowledge production and power.

Several overviews have been written on the history of Soviet folkloristics and folklore;⁹ in the following I have mainly used English-language analyses of Soviet folkloristics that have been published from the 1960s onwards. These books and articles about Soviet folkloristics present an overview of developments in Soviet Russia (for example Howell 1992) with only brief mention of the changes in other Soviet republics. An analysis of the whole Soviet Union would indeed be hard to conduct because of the language barrier because, although developments were directed by the central institutions in Russia, folklore studies in the socialist republics were carried out in native languages.

The roots of Russian folkloristics are in romantic interest in folklore. Before the 19th century, only casual records of folklore were made. (Oinas 1961: 362) Also the development of Estonian folkloristics in the 19th century was in-

⁹ For example, Miller 1990, Oinas 1961, Oinas 1973.

fluenced by the politics of the Russian Empire where the country belonged until 1918. For example, Andreas Kalkun claims that Jakob Hurt's work on Seto people could be also seen as a part of the colonial project of the Russian Empire, not only be placed in the national romantic context as it usually has been. Hurt's research in the area was financed by the ethnography department of the Russian Geographical Society (Kalkun 2011: 11) Prior to the October Revolution Russian folklorists were organised into two institutions, *Skazochnaia Komissii* (the Tale Commission) of the *Russkoe Geograficheskoe Obshestvo* (Russian Geographical Society) in Saint Petersburg, and the *Komissia po narodno slovesnosti* (Commission on Popular Literature) of the *Obschestvo liubiteli estestvoznaniia, antropologii, i etnografii* (Society of Devotees of Natural Science, Anthropology and Ethnography) in Moscow. These organisations were active until 1917 and laid the foundation for Soviet folkloristics (Howell 1992: 5).

The October Revolution did not instantly mean a different approach to folklore. Folkloristics was quite independent in the years after the revolution, for example between 1917 and 1927 folklore research was hardly affected ideologically or politically, although occasionally folklore was described as a useless remnant from the previous social order, even if it was workers' folklore. (Miller 1990: 6) The first decade after October Revolution has even been described as the golden era of the study of folklore in the Soviet Union, (Oinas 1973: 45) with authors such as Vladimir Propp or Petr Bogatyrev using formalist analysis in their works. (Panchenko 2012: 432–433) Russian formalism, an approach to understand the structure of the texts was formed in the years before the October revolution. In the first Soviet years, studies in other schools of thought that had been popular in the early 20th century continued to be used in the Soviet Union: historic-geographic method or the historical school with the goal to find reflections of historical events in folklore.

The folklorists of early Soviet Russia shared a common conception at this time that oral traditions were about to disappear and therefore documenting folklore was essential. Saving folk tales and *bylinas* seemed most urgent. (Howell 1992: 13–14) The thesis of disappearing folklore was not new, it had been part of folkloristic understanding for years. The “paradigm of loss”, meaning the understanding that folklore was about to disappear as a side-effect of modernity was a prevalent view among the folklorists of the 19th and early 20th centuries (Anttonen 2005: 49–51). In the early 1940s, folkloristics in the Soviet Union abandoned the thesis of disappearing folklore (Oinas 1961: 366) and claimed instead that they were studying new forms of popular creation.

The role of the folklore performer changed in the years after the October revolution. According to Howell (1992: 249), during the years after World War One peasants created and disseminated anti-regime lore, while in the late 1920s folklorists were needed to agitate the people to create songs and tales on ideologically more suitable topics. People were motivated to perform Soviet folklore to obtain prestige and support. A career as a folk singer or narrator brought the

chance to visit different locations and events, and in some cases also financial support (Oinas 1961: 367).

Soviet folklorists who were educated up to the 1930s generally used sociological methods and were interested in contemporary political topics (Howell 1992: 20), while the interest of the folklorists in the 1920s was mainly in the social aspects of folklore. Several new topics were researched: the folklore of the workers and revolutionaries, and anticlerical satire. The old topics were not completely abandoned but the research questions became more about the changes occurring in genres during the Soviet period, for example, the changes in fairy tales. Extensive fieldwork with the goal of collecting large amounts of material had been typical for Russian folkloristics and continued to be important to Soviet researchers. (Oinas 1961: 364–365) Instead of *stariny* (old songs) *noviny* (new songs) were collected and performed in which the lives of the Soviet leaders or the Heroes of Socialist Labour were depicted. These songs used the traditional *bylina* verse system as well as epithets typical of the old songs. Folklorists, too, searched for fairy tales that praised the Soviet leadership and changes that were occurring. The government encouraged the creation of new songs and tales. Authors and folklorists helped the performers by introducing facts about Soviet life to the performers and creators, and by correcting and editing the texts. (Oinas 1973: 50–52)

In early Soviet Russia, historical and formalistic schools had been the main types of research. Propp's *The Morphology of a Folktale* had been one of the highlights of Russian folkloristics at the time. Prior to the October Revolution, methods of the Finnish school had also been used by several Russian folklorists, Nikolay Andreev being the most notable of them. However, from the late 1920s formalism was attacked as a narrow academism. By the beginning of the 1930s the Finnish school too had been rejected as overly academic. (Oinas 1961: 363–364) This led to Vladimir Propp and Nikolay Andreev being made to perform self-criticism at a meeting of the Folklore Section of the Academy of Sciences in Leningrad in 1936.

Not only were the methods of folkloristics debated in these years, the role of the whole discipline of folkloristics was in the spotlight. In 1929, the Russian Association of Proletarian Writers was given control of publishing literature. The Association regarded folklore as ideologically backward and required folklorists show that their discipline was important to Soviet society (Miller 1990: 6–7). In the spring of 1931, intense discussions about folklore were held in Leningrad and Moscow. Issues relating to the definition of folklore were discussed, for example if folklorists should include wall newspapers in their research, and whether material created because folklorists asked for it was folklore. The latter was seen as acceptable because even the Brothers Grimm did not note down texts verbatim. Another issue was workers' folklore, which was deemed insufficient because folklorists had mainly collected romantic songs from the workers and these failed to show the essence of working class life: the folklore of the workers was not essentially workers' folklore (Howell 1992: 260–284).

However, from 1933 a campaign to support folklore was started by important journals such as *Literaturnaja gazeta* and *Literaturnyi kritik*. Folklorist Iurii Sokolov became chairman of the folklore section of the Union of Soviet Writers, holding this position until his death in 1941. His programmatic article “The Nature of Folklore and Problems of Folkloristics” (1934) shaped Soviet folkloristics by defining folklore as the poetic creation of the masses and folkloristics as a subdiscipline of literary studies. (Miller 1990: 9) This not only affected the theoretical discussions about folklore, but also the position of folklore performers in society. For example, in 1938 some talented narrators became full members of the Union of Soviet Writers. (Oinas 1973: 52)

Felix Oinas claims that Maxim Gorki’s speech at the 1934 All-Union Congress of Soviet Writers, mentioned above, made politicians aware of the possibility of using folklore for propaganda, and collecting folklore soon became strongly supported. (Oinas 1973: 47) Literary studies had to function within the framework of the five-year plans from the Stalin era onwards, meaning that folklore studies had to function to the same rhythm, taking its ideologically important place in forming “socialist culture” (Oinas 1973: 46). Therefore, in the early 1930s, an approach to folklore and folkloristics emerged that could be named Stalinist folkloristics. Folklore studies were directly shaped by the political circumstances.

Stalinist folkloristics:

- documented folklore about Lenin, Stalin, Great Patriotic War, October Revolution, also about life in kolkhozes and experiences of workers in a way that showed the positive aspects of the Soviet system; such materials were to have the formal characteristics of folklore and also be used in cultural communication;
- in lack of such folklore, instructed singers and storytellers to create texts that would correspond to this ideal;
- published and analysed such texts not only for research community, but also via mass media;
- reevaluated previous research and archival materials according to the Marxist-Leninist principles;
- understood folklore as a contemporary phenomenon and avoided documenting relics of older cultural traits that had a minor role in the contemporary life in the Soviet Union;
- used collective methods for documenting folklore;
- adapted to the new trends in Soviet research politics and the goals of the five-year plans;
- was ready to perform self-criticism;
- through its tasks, helped to build socialist culture.

Just as totalitarian power never managed to control all aspects of social life, also Stalinist folkloristics was not an approach that every folklorist in the Soviet Union between 1933 and 1953 would use in all of their works. While scholars

all over Soviet Union adapted to these ideals, it was problematic for them to fulfil all the expectations. Also Russian Soviet researchers tried to find approaches that would combine their pre-Soviet interests with the new research directions. The ideal of the Stalinist folkloristics is reflected in programmatic writings more than in real research practices. However, understanding these expectations that the folklore researchers faced helps to comprehend the framework their research needed to be placed in. Stalinist folkloristics was a research paradigm that continued to influence folklore studies in the Soviet Union and Soviet Bloc until the collapse of the Soviet Union, even when the approach itself was mainly abandoned in the late 1950s.

Stalinist folkloristics and the search for Soviet folklore was part of the larger process of creating Stalinist culture that was based on heroic themes. (Panchenko 2012: 434) The peak of this approach was during and right after World War Two, folklorists collected a lot of material about the war which was quickly published for propaganda purposes. (Oinas 1973: 53) After World War Two, a campaign against Western elements in Soviet literary studies was led by Andrei Zhdanov. International comparisons and citing Western researchers was no longer possible. A university textbook of folklore *Russian Folk Poetry (Russkoe narodnoe poeticheskoe tvorchestvo*, Moscow, 1954) depicted the development of folklore in Russia as being independent of the West. (Oinas 1961: 367)

Until the 1930s, different research institutes were dedicated to the study of folklore, many of which were reorganised. In the main folklore studies became part of work institutes dedicated to the study of literature, and from then folkloristics and literary studies remained close for the remainder of the Soviet period. (Panchenko 2012: 413) The two important institutions in the Soviet Union after World War Two were the Folklore Committee under the Academy of Sciences in Leningrad and the Folklore Section at the Maxim Gorki Literary Institute in Moscow. (Rogan 2012: 611)

Some changes can be observed in folklore studies after Stalin died in 1953 and de-Stalinisation began in 1956. Stalin's name was no longer mentioned in overviews or articles and folklore about him was no longer collected (or, probably, created). (Oinas 1973: 55) Some pieces of Soviet folklore, for example *noviny*, were widely criticised after de-Stalinisation because they represented individual artistic creation that never became folklore for the masses. The practice of guiding performers was discouraged and fieldwork material that was co-authored by folklorists was labelled pseudo-folklore. After the death of Stalin, formalistic and historical schools of thought were in favour again, although the Finnish school was not rehabilitated because the theory of borrowing folklore was unacceptable from the Marxist–Leninist perspective. (Oinas 1973: 55–57) Discussions about Soviet folklore were held until the late 1960s with the nature of the texts being criticised, while older Soviet folklore texts were republished until the 1980s (Panchenko 2012: 433).

Stalinist folkloristics not only shaped research of folk culture in the countries like Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania that were occupied by the Soviet Union during World War Two, but also other countries in East Europe that were not

part of the Soviet Union. Communist governments were installed, people trained in Moscow received key positions, political opposition was eliminated, public life was restricted, the media was controlled and emigration stopped (see for example Crampton 1997). Although nominally independent states, Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Poland and Romania were Soviet satellite states or Soviet Bloc countries.

These countries had their own traditions of ethnographic and folkloristic research. As folkloristics and ethnology were closely related research fields in most Soviet Bloc countries, often included in a single field, such as *Volkskunde* or *narodopis*, discussions about both fields are included in the following overview. After World War Two ways of studying people changed. Research was reorganised during the Stalinist period in all Soviet Bloc countries, although the amount of political control over the folklorists and ethnographers varied: while in Hungary and Poland the regulations were not that strict, the scholars of Czechoslovakia and East Germany were rigorously controlled (Hann, Sárkány, Skálnik 2005: 9). Despite these variations, some changes characterised developments in all Soviet and satellite countries, for example many leading academics only published propaganda, and research went thorough internal censorship before it was published. (Gingrich 2005: 147)

The folklorists and ethnologists of the Soviet Bloc countries tried to adapt to the new political situation, but generally their fields of interest remained similar to the pre-Socialist period. For example, in Czechoslovakia ethnography during the Soviet period was a “blend of historicism and archaism” in which topics such as the lives of miners were chosen to appeal to Soviet folkloristics. Here, however, instead of posing questions about the contemporary situation, researchers were restricted to asking about the past (Skálnik 2005: 70). At the same time, Hungarian ethnographers did document information on socialist topics, although the large amount of data did not bring new quality to the research (Sárkány 2005: 91). Polish ethnography had less political attention and the relationship between Polish and Soviet folklorists were formal and shallow. Polish ethnology also remained a study of the peasants. (Posern-Zielinski 2005: 110–110) In the Soviet Bloc, there were some changes in ethnology and folkloristics, but similarly to Soviet Estonia researchers failed to find enough folklore on suitable topics and continued to study rural culture.

In many Soviet Bloc countries, folk art and staged folklore in the form of amateur arts were subsidised and popularised during the post-war period, although only in forms that were devoid of religious traits. (Sárkány 2005: 91, Grill 2015: 361) At the same time while folk dance groups were strongly supported in early Socialist Czechoslovakia, ethnography (*narodopis*) as a research field was disfavoured as bourgeois nationalist research that did not fit the socialist reality. (Kilianova 2005: 262) This means that even when folklore was favoured by socialist governments, the discipline of folkloristics had to prove its usefulness.

As one example of folklore studies in the Soviet Bloc, I discuss folkloristics or *Volkskunde*¹⁰ in East Germany¹¹ (from 1949 German Democratic Republic, GDR) in comparison to folklore studies in Soviet Estonia in article IV. In both countries, folklore and folk culture were studied according to Marxist–Leninist theory and in generally sovietisation brought changes to institutional networks and teaching in both countries. The main difference was that while in Estonia folkloristics remained an academic endeavour, although sometimes popularised in newspapers or other publications, East German folkloristics was largely applied research categorised among the amateur arts. In theory, the purposes of folkloristic research were the same or similar, but the ways of interpreting these similar statements were different.

After World War Two, the eastern part of Germany was in the Soviet sphere of influence, and in 1949 the German Democratic Republic was founded. Research and politics were thoroughly connected in East Germany, especially in the research fields of history and social studies where the Socialist Unity Party of Germany (*Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands, SED*) took care to introduce Marxism and through it to create the basis for a socialist society. (Brinkel 2012: 40) Despite Gingrich’s (2005: 137) claims, about post-war folklore studies in Germany, that “the establishment of the communist GDR did not trigger much enthusiasm there for a field that had been marginal even in the Soviet Union”, the field turned out not to be so marginal after all. Folklore studies had two basic purposes: to support amateur arts and to provide material for historical research on democratic traditions that had previously been avoided by folklorists, as highlighted by Wolfgang Steinitz (1955: 2).

The work of Wolfgang Steinitz helped to bring clarity to the social importance of folklore studies for both the party and public. In fact, when the German Academy of Sciences had a conference on folklore in 1953, Wolfgang Steinitz gave a paper about folkloristic work in the GDR in which he argued that folklore had been disappearing since the Second World War. “But folkloristics, believed to be dead in 1945, woke of its sleep and took up its work again” (Steinitz 1955: 5–6) A cornerstone of renewing folkloristics was Steinitz’s article “German Folklore: An Important Part of the National Cultural Heritage” in which he advocated the new beginning of folklore studies and claimed that all higher education institutions should include folkloristics. Folklore studies should also help create a new kind of folk art. (Mohrmann 1994: 376) Another folklorist, Paul Nedo, claimed in his habilitation speech “Questions of Contemporary Folkloristic Research” that folklorists’ knowledge should be used for

¹⁰ In Germany, two ethnologic research fields *Volks-* and *Völkerkunde* were distinguished, *Volkskunde* meaning researching one’s own national culture and *Völkerkunde* being the study of the culture of other people. In the following analysis, *Volkskunde* is used in the meaning of folkloristics. For the development of the name *Volkskunde* in the second half of the 20th century see Bendix 2012.

¹¹ For a longer overview of East German folkloristics see for example in English Brinkel, Bendix 2009 and in German Brinkel 2012.

cultural politics. (Jahn 1991: 86) Therefore, the connections of cultural politics, folk art and folkloristics were established.

Hence, the reawakening of folkloristics in the GDR was not the result of academic discourse, but more of the cultural politics of the country. Folklore had been a prioritised because it fitted into both Soviet social theories and cultural movements. There was also a suitable person, Wolfgang Steinitz, a party member and recognised researcher, to lead developments in the field.

The World Festival of Youth and Students took place in Berlin in 1951, and Soviet folk art ensembles were a model to follow. (Jahn 1991: 82) Both the changes in humanities and in political system brought up the folkloristics of the new beginning (*Volkskunde des Neubeginns*). (Mohrmann 1994: 375) Folkloristics was supposed to be an applied science that helped provide data for performers. (Kühn 2015: 247–248) As the government expected more political content from amateur performances, folkloristic content did not keep up with the ideological demands and the discipline lost its importance in this regard. (Mohrmann 1991: 204–205) The brief and intense collaboration of folkloristics and amateur arts shaped the research interests of folklorists in the early GDR, although the connections between the fields diminished in the 1960s.

GDR folklore studies switched perspective and research questions, but not objects. Folkloristics was seen as a historical discipline that researched peasants and the urban middle classes, which included, in contemporary questions, the workers. Although the importance of new folklore was highlighted in many texts, the research areas of most folklorists remained traditional. Many researchers were not interested in the everyday life of post-war Germany¹². (Mohrmann 1994: 376) In the 1960s, GDR folkloristics had fewer political goals and became a discipline that researched social and cultural history. (Mohrmann 1994: 384) The importance of the discipline could be seen through its political influence. In the early GDR, where folklore studies had a political importance, the discipline itself developed quickly and had more questions to answer, although from the 1960s onwards it was marginalising. (Braun 2015: 154)

Folkloristics in the Soviet Union and in the Soviet Bloc was a field that had to prove its use to the state. After the relative freedom of the 1920s, folklorists needed to show the value of folklore to the Soviet regime by documenting (or co-creating) contemporary texts that proved the discipline had adapted to the new political situation. Previous methods were condemned and from the 1930s folklore was connected to literary studies. After the Stalinist period, folklorists needed to critically re-evaluate their work and the search for Soviet folklore ended. In the Soviet Bloc, the general expectations, from politicians to scholars, to study folklore on Soviet topics and collaborate with the amateur arts were similar in all countries, although the work of folklorists and ethnologists of some satellite states was controlled more closely than in others. The lack of particular political goals meant that the research field would be marginal within

¹² There were some exceptions, such as Reinhard Peesch, author of *Children's Games in Contemporary Berlin* (Das Berliner Kinderspiel der Gegenwart) 1957.

the field of cultural and research politics. Similar developments can be seen in Soviet Estonia.

2.3. Invented and staged folklore in the Soviet Union

One of the central traits of Stalinist folkloristics was Soviet folklore: the texts, that have been collected, archived, and published as such could mostly be described as invented, inauthentic folklore. Folklorists from different countries and periods have struggled with the concept of authenticity. And not only folklorists – the question of what is a ‘real’ tradition follows scholars from different disciplines. Unlike paintings or artefacts, where authenticity means uniqueness, folklore is authentic when it circulates in a society and when it is created and performed by a single person. Authenticity of folklore could also mean a lack of influence from written culture or the mass media. Next to folklore in its natural context, there are several other forms of cultural expression that border folklore, for example the staged performance of songs and dances that are presented as cultural heritage, or individual poetic creation that imitates the form of folklore. In the context of Soviet folkloristics during the Stalinist period, several forms of invented or staged folklore appeared and were praised as positive developments of folklore in the new social situation.

There are different ways of defining folklore-like phenomena that are not quite folklore, for example performances that resemble folklore in form or are labelled folklore by the media but are not folklore in the sense it was defined at the time. I am aware that the quest for authenticity can be “empty and at times dangerous” (Bendix 1997: 10), although I find that the division between folklore in its natural context and its uses in different situations is needed. For example, different methods are useful in analysing on the one hand folk songs that were widely sung and documented for the archives from different informants and on the other hand, and poems that were written for a wall newspaper and thereafter probably never used in any other social context on the other, despite the fact that invented and natural forms of folklore might influence each other. Anthony Shay, who analyses state folk dance ensembles, uses the concept of parallel traditions. Folk dances among the people and on stage influence each other and have several similarities, despite clearly being different genres that should also be analysed as such. (Shay 2011: 50) Researchers just need suitable methods for studying these different forms.

Invented folklore often seems historical and based on cultural traditions, although it is only created to make this impression. Cultural phenomena that claim to be more historical than they really are, are common in the field of folkloristics. Invented traditions (Hobsbawm, Ranger 1992) are cultural traits that are claimed to be old but are actually rather recent. Invented traditions often help to create a national identity. Benedict Anderson’s concept of imagined communities is close to this, i.e. people perceive themselves as part of a nation, a group that is not natural, but socially constructed (Anderson 1991: 6). That

some dishes, celebrations, or the whole concept of nationality are not something natural but are social constructions with a relatively short history, does not mean that they are worth less or should be abandoned. The same goes for folklore: a division between folklore and similar phenomena is necessary, but does not mean that the latter should remain unstudied.

A distinction between folklore and pseudofolklore has been made in different geographical areas, with various terminology used. In the USA, for example, the term 'fakelore' was coined by Richard M. Dorson (1950), with discussions in the US treating fakelore very critically. Another term for folklore that is used outside of its natural context is 'folklorism'. Discussions about folklorism held in West Germany since the 1960s placed folklore in the context of wider topics like political economy and culture politics. (Bendix 1997: 186) Hans Moser defined folklorism as "second-hand folklore", saying that in the West it derived from consumer markets, in the second world it was the result of cultural-political missions, and in the third world it was a reaction to progress. (Moser 1962: 180–185) A later definition by Hermann Bausinger (1984: 1405) states that folklorism is "the use of material or stylistic elements of folklore in a context which is foreign to the original tradition".

Many alternatives have been used for the often pejorative 'fakelore' and 'folklorism'. Finnish folklorist Lauri Honko has used a division between the first and second lives of folklore. In its first life, folklore exists in its natural environment and is unreflected – although this state rarely exists. Documenting and archiving folklore are parts of folklore's first life. In the second life of folklore, it is used in a different cultural context and through different mechanisms. (Honko 2002: 13–16) As another alternative concept, Alexander Panchenko has discussed the existence of two folklores: the first is oral culture that can be disseminated freely, the second are the texts that are officially seen as folklore, approved by society, and recorded and researched as such. (Panchenko 2005: 18)

Russian folklorists have dealt with issues of folklorism since the 1930s, using terms like *narodnoe tvorchestvo* (folk creation) or *sovremennyi folklor* (contemporary folklore). This was opposed to the academic study of folklore and denoted the activities of authors or amateur folklore enthusiasts. Folklorism was seen as an adaptation and transformation of folklore and was therefore generally seen positively as a more developed form of folklore. (Šmidchens 1999: 52–55) Folklore and pseudofolklore or fakelore often have very similar ideological roles and it is difficult to draw a line between the two notions. (Panchenko 2005: 31) In the following discussion, I use the term 'invented folklore' for this kind of material.

Discussions about the borders of folklore and folklore-like phenomena have lasted for a long time. Attitudes have varied according to the role that folklore has in society: it was seen as useless or as material worth of scholarly interest. The important balancing act comes when trying to understand invented folklore according to its own values. There is no binary scale that classifies something as folklore or not, rather there is a spectrum of different values. In the early Soviet

Union, many texts were presented as folklore despite being the creation of a single person and never used in a group. At the same time, some folklore that had been documented in earlier periods was re-presented in an ideologically suitable context. Texts that were created to be depicted as folklore show the ideological constraints of the time.

Soviet folklore is one of the most notable examples of invented folklore having a high value in society. Soviet folklore was defined by its tone and content and so these texts were disseminated like folklore or had a form typical to folklore, depicting Soviet-specific topics positively. These materials were collected by folklorists, who also educated the creators about the political situation and sometimes acted as co-authors. Soviet folklore depicted political leaders, the events of the Great Patriotic War or various revolutions, workers' lives or life on collective farms, etc. It is hard to say how many of these texts circulated in a way that would define them as folklore, but Alexander Panchenko assumes that while most of the folklore texts about Lenin that were archived and published were falsified, his figure did inspire folklore in Russia. (Panchenko 2005: 21–25)

The first wave of collecting Soviet folklore was between 1924 and 1930 with the main topics being Lenin and the Civil War in Russia. Mainly folk narratives were collected, or fabricated, and published. From the 1930s a second wave of Soviet folklore began, this time, and from now on, epic or lyric verse were the main genres. The topics widened so that apart from Lenin, Stalin, revolutionary Bolshevik Sergei Kirov or Red Army Commander Vasily Chapaev were praised, and topics like Party Congresses or collective farms appeared. (Panchenko 2012: 433–434) A collective volume of folklore in the Soviet period was published in 1952 (Astahova 1952) in which many of the texts praised Stalin. This publication was followed by a discussion on the borders of folklore and folkloristics in the Soviet Union that took place in, among others, the journals *Sovetskaja etnografiia* and *Novyi mir* and several institutions, such as the Folklore Department of the Moscow University and the Folklore Section of the Union of Soviet Writers. Various book reviews and critique and self-critique contributed to the discussion. (Miller 1990: 97–98, Bakhtin 1953, Leont'ev 1953a) Above all, a clear definition was sought. The distinction of folklore and literature had not been clear enough in previous publications and it was now felt that simply using the stylistic features of folklore did not make a text folkloric. This development led to a reduced expectation for the documentation of Soviet folklore.

When Estonia was occupied by the Soviet Union, Estonian folklorists were expected to document Soviet folklore. In the 1940s and 1950s, folklorists interviewed army veterans and factory workers and students conducted fieldwork in collective farms, etc. The materials reflect the topics that the folklorists and the people found suitable for preservation and presentation. Next to the poems and plays by amateur authors, that were written texts with little communicative value, some instances of more folklore-like phenomena appeared. The folk songs from Seto and Kihnu areas did depict Soviet developments in a positive

way and were not only presented to folklorists, but also performed in different social situations. (See also Kalkun, Oras 2018) Defining Soviet folklore was also seen as a complicated task for the folklorists in Soviet Estonia. In the collecting calls, materials collected on a new, Marxist, basis were brought out and new topics (like the Great Patriotic War) or previously unexplored topics like workers' folklore were highlighted. In 1951, Richard Viidalepp stated that the new folklore would be easily recognisable and finding it would not be a problematic issue, but what is problematic, however, is deciding if the new material was folklore or not, as lot of worthless material was collected.¹³ In the monthly reports of the Folklore Department of the Estonian Literary Museum, Soviet folklore collected in the previous month was noted on a separate line from the older folklore. Soviet folklore was basically defined by content, which had to relate to Soviet-specific topics (see for example Saarlo 2017a: 118). In Soviet Latvia there were several definitions of Soviet folklore, none of which was established as final, but basically, as with Estonia, the content determined if something was Soviet folklore or not. (Kencis 2019: 215)

Documenting contemporary folklore and supporting stage-performed amateur art on folkloristic themes were ways of gaining control over cultural practices and representations of folklore (cf. Kapper 2011, 2016). Amateur arts were subsidised by the state in the Soviet Union. The general understanding was that the task of Soviet folkloristics was to deal with amateur arts because no other discipline dealt with cultural practices that were performed as a creative hobby. However, whether amateur arts should be labelled folklore was under constant discussion. (Annist 1961: 1899–1901) Folklorists collaborated with the Central House of Folk Creation and participated in the inspections of amateur cultural activities¹⁴. Between the years 1946 and 1947 the number of people involved in amateur arts in Soviet Estonia more than doubled from 32 000 to 70 000. Some of the amateur groups only existed on paper, but nevertheless amateur arts were an important part of Soviet Estonian cultural life. (Karjahärm, Sirk 2007: 210) Amateur arts was also a space for folklorists and wider audiences to meet other practitioners. Especially in the Soviet Bloc, performances were framed as the folklore of a particular country creating the image of a progressive authentic tradition. (Grill 2015: 631–633) This kind of material was called folk creation and was, in the 1950s, a folklore research object in Soviet Estonia just as in other parts of the Soviet Union.

So, it is possible to distinguish the types of material that were archived as Soviet folklore in early Soviet Estonia, which included texts that were only archived because of their Soviet content not because they were folklore. But there were also texts that were communicated as folklore, for example songs and some sayings. These were more similar to actual folklore, although their creation, performance and dissemination was probably inspired by the benefits their performers could receive, for example being cited in newspapers, invited

¹³ RA, ERA.R-2345.1.90, pag 68.

¹⁴ About the term see Platonov 2007: 16.

to official events, etc. Folklore always reflects society, and the documented materials reflect not just the interests of collectors and performers, but also of folk culture itself.

The discussion about Soviet folklore reached Estonia very soon after it began in Russia. An article by Nikolai Leont'ev that was critical of Soviet folklore was summarised in Estonian in the same year and published in the weekly *Sirp ja Vasar* (Leontjev 1953b). The young folklorist Ülo Tedre discussed the folkloristic issues in nation-wide newspapers (Tedre 1954, 1955). Heldur Niit was an expert on the topic of the Soviet folklore, as he had written a course paper about kolkhoz folklore as a student and gave presentations on the topic at the conference of the Students Research Society. In 1954, at a meeting of the Chair of Literature and Folklore of the Tartu State University, Niit gave an overview of the folklore texts that were archived in the State Literary Museum as Soviet folklore, concluding that the texts were either aesthetically of low value or not folkloristic.¹⁵ Thereafter, collecting Soviet folklore was no longer the aim of Soviet Estonian folklorists. Occasionally, these kinds of texts continued to be published until 1980s (Krikmann 2001: 58–60).

In the 1960s, practices of collecting and creating what was called Soviet folklore during the Stalinist period were openly denounced. In 1967, an anthology titled *Russkii sovetskii folklor* (*Russian Soviet Folklore*) was published that intended to show the spread of folklore across the Soviet Union without falsification. Most of the folklore texts in the anthology were collected before Stalin's death but were contextualised by the editors, who showed the shortcomings of collection during the Stalinist period and how it focussed only on the positive side of Soviet life, leaving aside any criticism. (Miller 1990: 101–102) However, also in the 1970s, some text publications continued to include examples of texts that praised Lenin and the Communist Party. For example, the publication of Estonian proverbs in Ukraine in 1973 began with texts like “What Lenin has said, is proved by life” (Zavgorodni 1973) Apolitical research was not possible even after Stalin's death, although it was possible to focus on studying classical folklore genres, just with an emphasis on suitable facts and angles of research. (Saarlo 2017a: 118) These genres had been collected and studied throughout the Stalinist period to a much greater extent than the rare Soviet folklore.

Defining Soviet folklore meant also that non-Soviet folklore needed to be defined. Next to folklore with Soviet topics, there were always many folklore texts that had been documented before the Soviet period and/or had no Soviet-specific content. Some folklore was even seen as anti-Soviet, such as political jokes. In the working reports, conference papers and newspaper articles of folklorists in Soviet Estonia, folklore of this kind was called ‘older’, in some contexts also ‘traditional’. Both are problematic concepts because one of the main qualities of folklore is that it is always changing, old and new are intertwined and traditionality comes from a group decision to give a symbolic

¹⁵ RA, EAA.5311.63.33, pag 1–17.

meaning to certain aspects of cultural production. (cf. Handler, Linneken 1988). Liina Saarlo (2017a: 117) has used the term “archaic folklore” for the classical genres of folklore such as the Estonian folk song type *regilaul* as well as folk tales and legends. I intended to use the concept of ‘classical folklore genres’, although I am aware that this material might have been in use for less time than the Soviet material.

Soviet folklore is one of the most remarkable examples of invented folklore. The materials presented as Soviet folklore were largely created solely to be presented as such, so that the performers could gain acknowledgement and folklorists prove the usefulness of their discipline in building a Soviet society. Performances of folklore on stage were also supported by the Soviet authorities with folklorists included in discussions about folklore in the amateur arts in order to support amateur cultural production. In early Soviet Estonia folklorists searched for Soviet folklore and visited amateur arts events, although actually most of the material they documented belonged to the category of classical folklore. Soviet folklore was not collected, published, or studied after the Stalinist period: the nature of such materials was too dubious for the serious scholarly work. Soviet folklore was one of the main characteristics of late Stalinist folkloristics: finding, discussing, and publishing this kind of folklore was one of the central tasks of folklorists all over Soviet Union.

2.4. Historical context: Sovietising Estonia

World War Two brought several political changes to the Baltics. The Republic of Estonia was occupied in 1940–1941 by the Soviet Union, between 1941 and 1944 by Nazi Germany and from 1944 again by the Soviets¹⁶. The focus of the dissertation is on the period of Late Stalinism, i.e. the 1944–1956 period. This was an era of large changes and was characterised by political repression. These are the years when rupture from the previous system was clearest and the need to change research in all fields, and especially the humanities, to fit to the new paradigm was the strongest. After the Stalinist period, people became familiar with the Soviet order in its economic, social and political aspects (Tarvel 1999: 110). However, I will present some examples from the early 1960s to offer a better comparative perspective.

The Stalinist period is in focus here for three reasons: firstly, these were the years when new institutional networks developed and needed to adapt to the new regulations; secondly, the ideological pressure was the strongest in these years; thirdly, I am interested in the development of the careers of folklorists who were educated in the pre-Soviet system, how they learned new discourses. Joseph Stalin was the leader of the Soviet Union and the Communist Party between 1929 and 1953. In Soviet studies, the post-war period is often charac-

¹⁶ The history of sovietization of the Baltic states thoroughly studied, in English for example Hiio, Saueauk 2018, Misiunas, Taagepera 1993, Mertelsmann 2016b. The following overview is just a short introduction to contextualize the topics discussed in the thesis.

terised as late Stalinism, a term I use in several articles as it has the advantage of placing the developments in Estonia in the larger context of Soviet policy. However, the case of the Baltic states was specific as they became part of the Soviet Union only after Stalinism, with its purges, political repression and command economy had already shaped the life of Russia and other Soviet countries since 1927. What people in the Baltics experienced was less characteristic to late Stalinism and more just Stalinism. Notwithstanding this, the Stalinist period in the Baltics can be divided into different periods for different reasons. For example, from the point of view of cultural politics, Anu Raudsepp (2000: 137) suggests dividing the Stalinist era into three periods. The first (1944–1949) was the development period of Stalinist regulations regarding culture; the second (1949–1953) was the period of high Stalinist cultural politics; and the third (1953–1956) was the period after Stalin's death in which cultural politics underwent liberalisation. The entire period can be described as the period of sovietising the Baltics.

Initially, sovietisation was a concept that described the process of adapting the Soviet/Bolshevik government and organizational model in a certain territory, but later it came to mean reorganising the economy, society, and culture (Mertelsmann 2007: 14). Sovietisation denotes a complicated set of processes whereby elements of Soviet politics, economic and cultural systems were taken over. Sovietisation did not work according to one central plan: rather, there were many different solutions that had been influenced by the cultural and social background of the different countries. (Ibid.: 21–22) When talking about the sovietising of the Baltics the various social differences between these countries and other parts of the Soviet Union can be pointed out. The region was West-oriented with communist ideology having only a weak influence historically, most people supported independent nation states, and there was active opposition to sovietisation. (Zubkova 2007: 184) In Soviet Estonia, it was typical to idealise the pre-war period of childhood and youth for many people (Kõresaar 2004: 8).

The first years of occupation during and after World War II were characterised by mass deportations, collectivisation of farms and anti-Soviet guerrilla movements. Incorporating Estonia into the Soviet Union affected cultural politics as well, with the Stalinist years to 1953 bringing particularly severe changes. It should be noted that there was no one form of sovietisation, but rather many local variations. In some areas, the Soviet system meant modernisation, in others it brought colonisation. Both models worked simultaneously. (Mertelsmann 2012: 14; cf. Slezkine 1994)

The cultural politics of Soviet Estonia were more liberal than in many other Soviet states, but in comparison to the interwar period, the purposes and practices of research and cultural activity were thoroughly reshaped. In the first post-war years, ideological changes took place, although the process was relatively slow. From 1947 a wave of sovietisation began in Soviet Estonia, then starting in the second half of 1948 there was a campaign against humanities researchers. Journalism labelled every published work formalistic, cosmopoli-

tan, objectivistic (Vääri 2001: 31), and there were several campaigns against anti-Soviet traits.

In 1950, the ideological situation was more complex again. The 8th Plenum or the March Plenum of the Communist Party of Estonia, in 1950, influenced cultural politics. The Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union accused the leaders of the Communist Party of Estonia of favouring so-called bourgeois nationalists. The leaders of the Estonian Communist Party and about 400 researchers, authors, artists, and musicians were repressed after accusations of nationalism and formalism. This process strengthened the canon of social realism in Estonia. The March Plenum was not unique, similar events had taken place in other regions of the Soviet Union. (Karjahärm, Sirk 2005: 112–115) The concept of ‘bourgeois nationalism’ was deliberately vague in order to sovietise cultural life and help create a general atmosphere of fear in which anyone could be accused (Saarlo 2018b: 138). Only after Stalin’s death in 1953 did the situation change and cultural politics allow more freedom.

Sovietisation also took place in forms that not only introduced Soviet structures and vocabulary, but simultaneously supported national cultures of Soviet countries. For example, despite Russia’s official State Academic Ensemble of Popular Dance, Igor Moiseev Ballet (Moiseev Dance Company) seemingly represented various cultural traditions of the Soviet Union, the choices in repertoire and choreography showed the dominance of Russia and were rather free new creations than authentic folk tradition. Mostly, pieces from Russian choreography were performed. One dance from the Baltics was performed in a shortened version, although there were more and longer dances from larger Soviet republics such as Uzbekistan. (Shay 2011: 115–116) The Soviet Union could claim that through the folkdance ensembles it respected the ancient traditions of many of its peoples, unlike Western countries which destroyed the folk art of the colonised people. (Ibid.: 66) Soviet politics supported the national differences of the republics in the union. But at the same time, sovietisation also took place, i.e. folk dances were replaced with performances that fitted Soviet ideals.

In the Soviet Estonia, sovietisation can be seen through colonialist perspective. Soviet Union occupied Estonia and had the ruling power in a country that *de jure* was an independent state. At the same time, the processes of imposing Soviet ideology and cultural practices on Estonian population were similar to colonialism, just as the mechanisms of mimicry and hybridity that the people used to adapt to the new system. Estonia became a part of the Soviet Union during the Stalinist period of repressions where the population needed to rapidly adjust to the new system. At the same time, the people remembered how the life before the Soviet occupation had formed their personal and professional identities.

2.5. Sovietising folkloristics in Estonia

During the Stalinist period, Soviet folkloristics focused on contemporary aspects of folklore. The field needed to adapt to the new aims of cultural politics and modernise according to the Soviet model. However, in Estonian folkloristics one does not notice modernisation, rather it became more conservative and folklorists continued to study folklore as it had been understood before the Soviet occupation (Saarlo 2018b: 136). Folklorists applied collective methods in collecting folklore, incorporated citations from Marxist–Leninist authors in their writing and searched for Soviet folklore and connections that could link Estonian and Russian folklore. However, in most of their work, they valued oral rural folk culture and classical genres of folklore: Marxist–Leninist theory framed the research, but the main conclusions of projects were hardly shaped by the Soviet understanding of folklore.

Olaf Mertelsmann (2016a: 186) has argued that Russification was not the goal of sovietisation and cites relatively large cultural autonomy and education in Estonian language as counterexamples to the political repressions. The repression of creative professionals, censorship, etc., did shape cultural production, but interestingly folk culture had a relatively high status as it was the creation of the broad masses of people. For example, Björn Felder (2016: 22) claimed that “the policy was to change the Latvians so dramatically that a Latvian identity could only be accepted on a folklore level”. Soviet nationality policy supported national cultures in areas that suited Soviet ideology. National differences were welcome on the level of folk culture, and all nationalities were encouraged to have a distinct national culture, but in so far as it fitted in with Soviet policies.

Somewhat counterintuitively, Soviet nationality policy not only accepted but promoted ethnic particularism. According to Yuri Slezkine (1994), the Soviet Union was not only a class-based society, in order to disseminate Soviet ideology, it was important to use the native languages of the many ethnic groups of the Soviet Union. Support for small languages was supposed to help the multinational population understand Soviet ideas; national form was to be filled with Soviet content. The promotion of ethnic particularism can be seen in the plethora of administrative units for different ethnic groups in the 1930s. From the 1930s, fraternity of peoples in the USSR was promoted. The republics were expected to build their own distinct national cultures including literature, arts and folklore, which would be “protected, perfected and if need be, invented” (Slezkine 1994: 447). So although one could think that Soviet culture focused on classes and rejected nationalities, the latter remained an important category throughout the Soviet period. Countries within the Soviet Union having national cultures fitted in with the ideological image of the country. However, it was difficult to express the right amount of nationality without it being labelled bourgeois nationalism. Russian language and culture did enjoy a higher position in the Soviet Union, but this could also be seen as Great-Russian chauvinism.

Folkloristics as a discipline could have been rejected in the Soviet system because it could seem to be a research field that supported pre-Soviet ideology, depicting the cultural phenomena of different nations and supporting nation building. However, not only was it possible for folklorists to continue working because the concepts of folk and folk creation were emphasised in the Soviet Union as one of the cornerstones of cultural life, folkloristics was even seen as one of the most important disciplines within the humanities. Yet, the work of the folklorists provided too weak support to Soviet ideology and so amateur cultural activities received more support from the state than the sometimes dubious folklore studies. (Saarlo 2018b: 137–138) In their work, folklorists and other scholars needed to find a research angle that would not contradict Soviet ideology, while at the same time not producing work that was usable only as propaganda. For example, to avoid direct collaboration, ethnologists tried to avoid research topics that were state-supported, such as the developments in contemporary culture that could be used to justify Russification. (Johansen 1995: 196) Folklorists reconceptualised their previous work and used Soviet parlance to present it in a new context.

Estonian folklorists of the interwar period were in a dialogue with the research conducted in the Northern Europe. At the same time, Estonian and Russian folkloristics had developed parallel until World War Two, without much contact. When Estonia was occupied by the Soviet Union, folkloristics too was sovietised: different republics of the Soviet Union followed similar theoretical ideas about folkloristics and quoted the same authorities (Saarlo 2003: 14–15). Coursebook of Russian folkloristics by Soviet Russian folklorist Īurii Sokolov was translated in the first Soviet years (Sokolov 1947). In order to learn the new research directions, Estonian folklorists visited the Communist Party evening university and learned Russian language. As not all folklorists were good enough in Russian, the colleagues who were more proficient in the language, read the articles and introduced them to their colleagues, for example according to the working plans of the Folklore Department of the State Literary Museum in 1951, Normann and Lõhmus introduced the articles of the journal *Советская этнография* to their colleagues who were less fluent in Russian¹⁷.

However, the most important part of international contacts in the Stalinist years took place in the form of large research events. The research conferences and congresses gave a possibility for the researchers in central Soviet research institutions to evaluate the research conducted in the periphery and introduce the new ideological directions. First direct contact of ILL and another Soviet research institution was in 1947 when Elmar Päss visited Karelia for a conference where issues of Kalevala were discussed. (Ahven 2007: 34) In 1947, Eduard Laugaste visited the All-Union congress of Finno-Ugric languages in Leningrad. He visited museums, worked at the libraries and archives and found contacts among folklorists of other Finno-Ugric nations. Several conferences followed where Estonian researchers participated: when the researchers returned,

¹⁷ EFAM, item “Work plans, reports, schedules”.

the main topics of the conferences were usually introduced to other Estonian folklorists in large discussion meetings. Especially in the years 1950-1951, Estonian folklorists were instructed to document contemporary Soviet folklore and study amateur arts. Through research conferences and publications, Soviet Estonian researchers learned what was expected of them.

Reconceptualising folklore in the early Soviet Estonia was possible because in the history of folkloristics, different aspects of the concept *folk* have been emphasised. Alan Dundes has shown how folk can be any group of people who share at least one common factor (Dundes 1965: 2). But in the discursive history it is important to pay wider attention to how the group that carries folklore has been defined and described. The people who are creating and using folklore have often been described as peasants: as rural, low-class, often illiterate people (Dundes 1980). During the period of romantic nationalism, folklore collecting was inspired by the idea that the 'simple' people could carry the spirit of a nation. In Estonia and Latvia, ethnic and social borders coincided until the 20th century, as Estonians and Latvians were not only ethnic groups but also the lower social classes. A rise in social position in these countries at that time meant Germanisation. Collecting folklore was documenting something typical to the ethnic group who comprised the lower strata of society and so folklore represented Estonianness, the poetics of a nation. Folklore collecting before the Second World War had taken place within the Estonian national framework, with the understanding of folklore being similar among folklorists, the authorities and the wider masses, who were both the source of folklore and audience for text publications on folklore.

Because of the coinciding national and social borders it was easy to show the social aspects of folklore instead of discussing folklore in the national framework. In pre-Second World War Estonia, the word folklore (*rahvaluule*, folk poetry) was used to signify a kind of oral poetry that was related to *rahvus*, the nation. In Soviet Estonia, the meaning was transferred to *rahvas*, meaning the broad masses of the people, implying the lower social strata and the working class. In reports and newspaper stories, folklore and archival materials were made to represent values that fitted with the Soviet political ideology. (See also Article I)

The different ways of describing the people who create and perform folklore made it possible to revalue folklore collections in a positive way. The materials could be represented as the creation of the working people, which filled them with layers of meaning that were suitable to a Soviet country. It was far more difficult with literature: books were banned and burned, and reprints were strongly edited, while folklore was safely in the archives. In one of the production meetings at the Folklore Department of the Estonian Literary Museum, it was even stated that the kind of folklore that could never be published should still be in the archives for research and comparison.¹⁸ In Soviet Estonia, the folklore collections represented the creative spirit of the working people. The

¹⁸ EKM, n 1, s 102, l 32–33.

process of documenting folklore continued, although the slogans and keywords differed. So, although folklore collecting in Estonia had been largely carried out with national ideas in mind, the collections in general could easily represent ideas that suited Soviet ideology. However, not all folklore material fits this picture.

Of course, the goals of collecting folklore also depended on the topic researched. When, for example, Helmut Joonuks encouraged pupils to collect anticlerical folklore, he supported his claim with a hope that these materials would serve as examples in atheistic lectures and could be used for political agitation. (Joonuks 1963: 217) One of the purposes of documenting folklore had been filling the gaps in the earlier collections. This principle was similar to collecting before World War II, but the gaps were of a different kind because the previously collected material did not show class struggle in village society. Contemporary folklore collecting was needed to show folklore as an ideology of certain social classes. (Haberman 1961: 18) However, as most of the collected material represented classical genres of folklore, contextual information about class struggle was not widely documented. On the one hand, researchers were used to searching for this type of material, so they had suitable methods and networks. On the other hand, most of the interviewees would have not understood the new nature of folklore and would present what they understood to be folk creation.

Sovietising folkloristics also meant control of archived folklore. The archives of the newly formed Soviet state had to function according to the general rules applied to other Soviet countries. In 1940s, the main archival goal was to find politically unsuitable records and to create special departments for classified documents. Whole record groups were taken to special deposits, for example most of the documents created during the German occupation of 1941–1944 were classified. (Pirsko 2005: 91) Similar changes took place in libraries, where departments of special storage were created for banned books, information about the existence and contents of which was not made public. As the lists of banned books were long, the result was restriction of almost all literature in Estonian. (Annuk 2003: 21) Changes of this kind were also made in Latvian (Dreimane 2004: 59–60) and Lithuanian (Sinkevičius 1995: 86–87) libraries. Although banning and repressing literature had begun in the first year of the Soviet occupation, control over libraries was much stricter starting from the autumn of 1944 (Veskimägi 1996: 154–155) when memory institutions were forced to re-evaluate their collections.

While the orders to clear the archives came directly from the institutions that governed archives, libraries and museums, information about what kind of folklore to collect and study was communicated at research conferences, where scholars all over the Soviet Union, or from selected parts of the Union, met. The suggestions of Soviet colleagues and trends from research literature shaped the methods and theories of research. Researchers were not free in their decisions, but could choose to represent certain topics in certain ways that would fit with the ideology. In this sense, sovietisation of Estonian folkloristics was a hybrid

act in which scholars would combine several understandings of what folklore was. Their work was shaped by this combination of different paradigms, one that many of them had used for years and another that was necessary to continue work in the field.

2.6. Three institutions collecting and researching folklore

2.6.1. The Folklore Department of the State Literary Museum

In 1927, different folklore collections in Estonia were gathered in the newly founded Estonian Folklore Archives and methods of describing and indexing collections were established. The Estonian Folklore Archives became the central folklore archive in the Estonian Republic. The folkloristic institutions were restructured during the Soviet period. The restructuring largely took place already during the first Soviet year in 1940. During the German occupation, the institutions were reorganised, and again in 1944 the Soviet regime continued with its plans from three years earlier. In 1940, Estonian National Museum had been divided into the State Ethnographic museum and the State Literary Museum. (Kukk 2009: 691–692) Throughout the thesis, I will use the name Literary Museum for the institution that is now called the Estonian Literary Museum and which was founded in 1940 as the State Literary Museum (and in the years 1953–1990 was the Fr. R. Kreutzwald State Literary Museum of the ESSR Academy of Sciences).

The Folklore Archives were part of the Literary Museum and were renamed the Department of Folklore. The Soviet Union did not have a central folklore archives and as the Estonian system of research and memory institutions had to correspond to that of other Soviet states, several institutions collected and analysed folklore. Both the Folklore Sector of the Institute of Language and Literature and the Chair of Estonian Literature and Folklore at Tartu State University, which will be introduced in the following sections, had their own collections.

The Literary Museum was officially not an archive but a museum and therefore governed initially by the People's Commissariat of Education, and from 1946 by the Ministry of Education. Museums were governed either by the Department of Education or Department of Arts. (Kukk 2009: 694) This was different for the archives that contained historical records: they were governed by the Main Board of Archives, which was controlled directly by the Council of Ministers (Tannberg 2005: 125). Yet, the Literary Museum was not a typical museum displaying artefacts and offering education services, but rather a research institution. As such, it belonged to the Academy of Sciences of the Estonian SSR, which had been founded in Tallinn in 1946. This complex institutional affiliation and the fact that it was only one of the institutions to collect, store and research folklore and literature meant that several ideas of restructuring were discussed in the first years of Soviet Estonia. In the 1940s and 1950s the decision was made to create three separate folklore collections, and

this system continued until the collapse of the Soviet Union. Today, all these collections are gathered in the Estonian Folklore Archives.

The tasks of the Literary Museum generally related to collecting, storing, and systematising material relating to folklore and literature, as well as analysing literary heritage and folklore and introducing these fields to broad audiences. The question of how much research should be carried out by the Literary Museum and how much by other research institutions was discussed throughout the Soviet period. For example, in 1951 there was a plan that work done in the Folklore Department should only support the research conducted by the Institute of Language and Literature, meaning that no research would be carried out by the folklorists of the Literary Museum.¹⁹ Yet, it was clear that documenting and systematising folklore were simultaneously research activities and a basis for the study of folklore, therefore the staff of the Folklore Department also wrote papers and gave presentations for most of the Soviet period. In 1951 the relocation of the Literary Museum to Tallinn to facilitate collaboration with the Institute of Language and Literature was also under discussion. The Department of Literature and Folklore at Tartu State University was against this decision because it would make it more difficult for students and professors to conduct research: the Folklore Department was in the vicinity of the university in Tartu and there was active collaboration between the two institutions.²⁰ The Folklore Department remained in Tartu and researchers at the Folklore Sector of the Institute of Language and Literature needed to travel to use the older folklore collections.

The folklorists of the Folklore Department carried out various tasks in the first years of Soviet Estonia. During World War Two, the folklore collections were not safe in the centre of the country's second largest town Tartu. The materials were evacuated to the countryside accompanied by the archive staff who stayed with the collections to monitor storage conditions. The staff also tried to continue normal archival work such as indexing and copying. Some folklore materials were brought back to Tartu in the autumn of 1944 when fighting on mainland Estonia had finished, while the last materials were returned to Tartu in the spring of 1945. Already on 6th March 1945 a group from Tartu State University visited the collections, although some professors had visited even earlier. (Viidalepp 1969: 173–184)

Therefore, during the first Soviet years, the main issue around the folklore collections was their physical preservation: suitable storage conditions, returning the materials to their original archives in Tartu, etc. Directives for controlling the collections followed soon after the beginning of the Soviet occupation with materials that did not fit in with Soviet ideology to be removed from the archives. (See article II for more detailed overview.) This first wave of censorship, from 1945 to 1946, saw most of the manuscripts of the Folklore Department controlled. There was a second wave of censorship in the 1950s,

¹⁹ EKM, n 1, s 169.

²⁰ RA, EAA.5311.63.16, pag 100.

when the contents of the folklore collections were checked again. This time mainly obscene words were removed from texts, and obscene texts removed altogether.

Most of the post-war staff of the Folklore Department had already worked there before war, although not all pre-war researchers were able to continue their work, for example Oskar Loorits, head of the archives, had emigrated to Sweden and Rudolf Põldmäe was in prison between 1945 and 1950. However, Richard Viidalepp (until 1947), Olli Jõgever, Salme Lõhmus, Selma Lätt, Erna Normann and from 1952 Herbert Tampere worked at the archive. Olli Niinemägi and Ellen Veskisaar were the first alumni of Tartu State University with a Soviet education in folkloristics to start to work at the Folklore Department in mid-1950s. There were also several people worked as temporary helpers at the Folklore Department to systematise card copies and folklore texts and make copies of the materials. These helpers were mainly students, although in 1951 folklorist Herbert Tampere, who was then working at Tallinn State Conservatory, systematised the index cards at the Folklore Department. Re-educating the staff of the Literary Museum in Soviet matters was accomplished through various courses, for example all researchers were expected to attend Marxist–Leninist evening courses. In 1946 the 12 researchers of the Literary Museum attended Communist Party evening university four hours a week with some attending lectures on dialectical materialism at Tartu State University. In addition, those researchers who were not fluent in Russian had language classes twice a week.²¹

The Folklore Department of the State Literary Museum was the institution where older folklore collections were gathered. It had to adapt to the new regulations, censor and reevaluate the folklore in the archives, present older folklore according to Soviet paradigms and document Soviet folklore. As the Department was nominally part of a museum and the newly founded Institute of Language and Literature was the actual research institution, it was expected that the folklorists of the Folklore Department would simply support the research activities. However, documenting and systematising folklore was indivisible from research and the folklorists of the Literary Museum continued to study folklore and present and publish their research results.

2.6.2. Tartu State University Department of Folklore

The University of Tartu was founded in 1632 at a time when the Estonian mainland was part of the Swedish Empire. The university was closed during the Great Northern War in 1710 and reopened in 1802. It was the only German-language university in the Russian Empire in the 19th century and an important centre of higher education in the Baltics. With the advent of the Republic of Estonia in 1919, the university was restructured and for the first time, higher education was given in Estonian. In 1940, when Estonia was occupied by the

²¹ EKM, n 1, s 12.

Soviet Union, the university was restructured again and renamed Tartu State University. In 1944, after three years of German occupation during which it was called Ostland-Universität in Dorpat, it became again Tartu State University.

The study programs of Soviet Estonian universities went through several changes. Instead of the previous system of picking their own courses, students were expected to go through compulsory courses in a certain order, and attending lectures was compulsory. Curricula were unified across the Soviet Union with every student attending classes on Marxism–Leninism and physical education. University applicants had to report details of their family background such as economic situation and the social class of their parents. (Karjahärm, Sirk 2007: 92) Seminars were generally replaced with lectures. In the first years of Soviet Estonia particularly there was little potential reading matter for the students because much of the older literature had been censored and banned or was just seen as inappropriate for Soviet youth. The main goal of the universities was to form suitable members of the Soviet workforce, research was mainly carried out in separate institutes.

The University of Tartu had a folklore chair from 1919. Walter Anderson was the holder of the Chair of Estonian and Comparative Folklore between 1920 and 1939. Lectures were also given by Matthias Johann Eisen (died in 1934) and Oskar Loo. In 1944 when the university was restructured, the chair was renamed the Department of Folklore of Tartu State University and in 1948 was merged with the Department of Literature, although the possibility to specialise in folkloristics remained. Although folkloristics was merged with literary studies it remained relatively independent in form and content. The previous teaching staff had left the country: in addition to Oskar Loo leaving, Walter Anderson had emigrated to Germany. Most of the courses were now given by Eduard Laugaste. Courses in the field of folklore introduced Soviet theories and re-evaluated folkloristic work before the Soviet period. Students also conducted practical tasks in the archives and collected folklore.

The Department of Literature and Folklore educated future folklorists about folklore genres and methods and about research history. Teaching plans reflect the Soviet perspective on folkloristics. The choices the students made in their research and fieldwork show low levels of interest in Soviet topics and underline the wish to document and study the classical genres of folklore (see more in Article IV). So, despite the many formal changes in the study of folklore, the new generation of folklorists, educated in a Soviet university, was only marginally interested in developing Estonian folkloristics in the Soviet direction. Rather, pre-Soviet topics remained interesting to the young researchers.

2.6.3. The Folklore Sector at the Institute of Language and Literature

Both the State Literary Museum's Folklore Department and Tartu State University's Department of Folklore were established research and teaching institu-

tions during the interwar period. As a third centre of folklore studies, the Institute of Language and Literature (ILL) with a Folklore Sector was founded in 1947 as a research institute.

The institutional position of the Folklore Sector meant that folklorists needed to follow Soviet standards even more strictly than their colleagues in other institutions. Karjahärm and Sirk (2007: 613) described museums as retreats for peaceful research, whereas the staff of the institutes faced more ideological pressure and control of their work. This is also reflected in the work of the Institute of Language and Literature (ILL). Its Literature Sector was, throughout the years, ideologically the most problematic and therefore more heavily criticised (Ahven 2007: 121). In addition, the research of the Folklore Sector was frequently discussed. The issue of dividing tasks between the Literary Museum and the ILL was confusing because both had similar goals. The discussion meetings held by folklorists from the Folklore Department of the State Literary Museum, and those of the Folklore Sector of the Institute of Language and Literature, were often held together in the Stalinist years, making it even harder to divide the research questions and areas. It was stated that the main task of the institute was research, not collection, which should be performed by the Literary Museum,²² although Folklore Sector staff were active in collecting folklore: they organised their own fieldwork as well as joining collective interdisciplinary expeditions. For their collected materials, a separate folklore archive was founded by the Folklore Sector and the folklore indexed.

In the first years, the goal was to find staff for the newly founded Sector and several recent graduates started their careers here. The folklorists were expected to use new, Soviet working methods, although in some instances they failed to fulfil these expectations. (Päll 1956: 167, Ahven 2007: 55) Educating young folkloristics according to the aspirantuur (Russian: *аспирантура*) graduate study program, which culminated in a scientific degree in folkloristics, was also part of the Sector's work. In addition, more mature researcher Richard Viidalepp had joined the Sector in 1947. The ILL Folklore Sector was led by Eduard Laugaste between 1947 and 1950. He, like other sector heads, worked part-time at the university and part-time at the institute. (Ahven 2007: 27)

Nineteen fifty was the year of repressions in several institutions. At a meeting of the primary party organisation of the Communist Party at the Academy of Sciences, secretary Jüri Nuut claimed that 20% of people working at the ILL were politically unsuitable for their positions. (Ahven 2007: 69–70) The research staff was reassessed: in 1950, Richard Viidalepp lost his Master's degree and his salary was lowered from 2 500 to 980 roubles. Viidalepp wrote a new dissertation and obtained the degree of candidate of sciences in 1965 (Viidalepp 1965). The constant revaluation of the work and research perspectives made it difficult for researchers to establish a good research atmosphere.

In the 1947–1952 period the ILL was based in Tartu together with several other Academy of Sciences institutions such as, for example, the Institute of

²² See for example RA, ERA.R-2345.1.90, pag 148.

History and the Institute of Physics, Mathematics and Mechanics. In 1950, most of the institutes of the Academy of Sciences relocated to Tallinn, the capital of the Estonian SSR, where they could be directly managed and ideologically guided, for example the ILL in 1952. This relocation created numerous logistical issues, particularly the relocation of staff. Eduard Laugaste who simultaneously worked at Tartu State University gave up his position in the Folklore Sector and on 1st August 1950 Viidalepp became the head. The folklorists of the Sector spent long periods in Tartu, working with the collections there. (Ahven 2007: 106–108)

Although the ILL had established its own folklore collection, the main research sources were in the large collections of the Literary Museum. The office of the Department of Social Sciences at the Academy of Sciences suggested joining the ILL Folklore Sector and the Folklore Department of the Literary Museum in 1953. (Ahven 2007: 137) Although the question was discussed in different institutions during the following year, no suitable solution was found (ibid.: 151). The number of days spent in Tartu was a burden for ILL folklorists, for example in 1957 the staff spent a total of 508 days in Tartu. The largest share was taken by Ülo Tedre with 168 days, followed by Loreida Raudsep with 125 days and Richard Viidalepp with 90 days (ibid.: 202). Despite the difficulties in organising work for ILL folklorists when the source materials were in another city, the ILL Folklore Sector and the Department of Folklore remained separate institutions – the (older) archive collections in Tartu and the ILL in Tallinn – for the whole Soviet period.

The ILL was founded in order the Soviet Estonia would have a new, Soviet, institution for the study of folklore, language and literature. However, the implementation of Soviet research methods and theories was just as hard for ILL researchers as for other scholars. The division of folklore studies tasks between the different institutions was another issue that complicated research with all three institutions successfully documenting various genres of folklore, archiving and indexing collected material and carrying out other forms of folklore study.

2.7. Valuable folklore: discrepancies between statements and practices

The following chapter demonstrates the discrepancies between the official statements and the folklore that was valued by the folklorists. During the birth of Estonian folklore studies folklorists searched for oral, rural, ethnic, and pagan material, excluding the literary, urban, multicultural, and Christian traditions. (Beyer 2011: 43–44) The scope of folkloristics widened in the Republic of Estonia. Since the late 1920s, folklorists like Oskar Looorits encouraged people to document folklore on contemporary topics. Soldiers' or children's lore (Looorits 1929) or the folklore of the ethnic minorities in Estonia (Looorits 1936: 176) were documented in these years. Also Walter Anderson, professor of folklore at

the University of Tartu, was interested in contemporary phenomena like rumors or chain letters. Different approaches were used in the 1930s: historic-geographic method was a major research approach, but folklorists were also interested in folklore performers and stylistic issues. An ethnological approach to folklore research emerged, where importance of fieldwork and contextual information was emphasized by folklorists who worked at the folklore archives like Richard Viidalepp or Herbert Tampere. Documenting contemporary folklore was already common in the interwar period, but folklorists in the early Soviet Estonia were not free to follow their research interests in collecting folklore about current situation. Instead of documenting the songs, tales and sayings that were actually popular, they needed to find folklore that reflected contemporary Soviet topics in a positive way, were expected to visit urban populations and interview Russian minorities.

In the first Soviet years collecting Soviet folklore was rather sporadic. In 1946, most of the folklore about the Great Patriotic War was collected through a socialist competition between the staff of the Folklore Department of the Literary Museum to celebrate the First of May. Erna Normann, the head of the Department, collected 364 pages of soldier's songs and battle descriptions from Paul Tõldsepp. The other staff members and three correspondents also collected this kind of folklore, the sum of pages of Great Patriotic War folklore collected in 1946 reaching almost 900.²³

It was hard to find enough folklore that would depict the Great Patriotic War or the Soviet system in a positive way and this lack of material gave rise to stricter control over incoming folklore. Two museology conferences for linguists, ethnographers, and folklorists, held in 1948, shaped collecting methodology for decades. The first museological research conference took place in February 1948 with important decisions for folkloristics including the plan to organise collective collecting expeditions²⁴. Until then, folklorists had mainly conducted fieldwork alone or in pairs, but the importance of collective expeditions where other field workers could help fill any potential gaps was emphasized at the conference.

At the conference in February 1948 it was decided that folklore should be collected collectively, meaning expeditions where folklorists travel to a certain area to document folklore should be large and organised by different institutions. Folklorists and other expedition members should also work collectively through regular meetings and discussion. The numerous advantages of expeditions included the possibility to discuss mistakes immediately, the understanding of folklore as a superstructure based on economics, the use of dialectic methodology, the change of function of folklore, and recognising the connection between folklore and other disciplines. (Pino 1950: 35–39)

The first collective expedition, with eight participants from four institutions, took place the same summer to Kihnu island. Four folklore collectors went to

²³ EFAM, item "Work plans, reports, schedules".

²⁴ EKM, n 1, s 112.

Setomaa that summer and a larger collective expedition to Setomaa took place a year later. Collective collecting meant that logistics had to be carefully discussed among the participants. But discussions – or production meetings as they were called – were meant to cover theoretical and methodological issues as well, and despite them being a common practice their function was not as ideological as expected. For example, Richard Viidalepp was critical in his field notes because he thought that the meetings had not been productive and were not analysing the overall goals of the collecting, only practical and logistical issues.²⁵ The statements of the museological research conference were analysed in comparison to fieldwork practices by Veera Pino, who as a student had taken part in the conference in the spring and in the expedition to Setomaa the following summer. The result of this was her diploma thesis in which she talks reflexively about the expedition and about the collecting methodology.

Veera Pino asked if the 1948 expedition had brought a new paradigm in folklore collecting. The main part of the work was an analysis of the expedition's planning and influence as well as of the collected materials. Pino took the following into account when analysing the materials: the principle of historicism, class struggle, the connections and functionality of folklore items, typology, the technical organisation of the materials, and creative psychology. (Pino 1950: 11–12) In 1948, the problem was that the interviewers had not characterised their informants enough to make it possible to analyse the class structure of the collected folklore. (Ibid.: 86, 179) In addition, younger people were not interviewed, rather, informants were people who knew older folk songs, an unexpected choice for an expedition that was supposed to collect Soviet folklore. Pino claims that the expedition did not bring a qualitatively new level of folklore collecting because new song texts were collected without also noting the context, continuing the bourgeois understanding of folklore according to which the economic base does not matter. (Ibid.: 96–97) It should be noted that in the Estonian ethnology and folkloristics, similarly to the same disciplines in other parts of Europe until the 1960s, the social context of items and customs was rarely recorded. (Johansen 1995: 185) Pino claimed that her own field notes had been written only after the expedition because the head of the expedition Elmar Päss had thought his own notes would be enough. (Pino 1950: 168) To sum up, Pino found it positive that the expedition had been working with contemporary Soviet issues and noted down materials on folk music. But in general, the class and social structure, the repertoire of newer folk songs and other Soviet issues were not reflected well enough in the results of the expedition. So in general, the theory and praxis of the expedition didn't support each other and the goals were not fulfilled. (Ibid.: 191) The minimal amount of contextual information, the habit of interviewing older people and the lack of Soviet folklore also characterised other expeditions in the early Soviet period.

In the 1944–1958 period, the most popular regions for folklorists from the Folklore Department of the State Literary Museum were Setomaa, Kodavere,

²⁵ KKI 16, 70–71 < Setomaa – Richard Viidalepp (1949).

Kihnu, Iisaku, Jõelähtme, and Muhu. The south Estonian Orthodox region of Setomaa and the islands Kihnu and Muhu were often visited because they were known for their traditional lifestyles and various forms of folklore. Here, folklorists did find improvisational material that fitted the definition of Soviet folklore. Despite one expedition visiting the more industrial area of Jõhvi in this period and the resolution of the 1948 museological conference noting more workers' lore, most of the collecting still took place in rural areas.

Since the time of Jakob Hurt, information about folklore collecting had been published in the newspapers and volunteer correspondents collaborated in collecting Estonian folklore. In 1938, the number of correspondents of the Estonian Folklore Archives was 277, of whom 167 were active. In 1947, the Folklore Department had 111 correspondents. The old and new correspondents were engaged in the work of the Folklore Department by newspaper articles and personal letters.²⁶ A lack of correspondent activity was explained by the length and complexity of the questionnaires,²⁷ although the issue was indeed more complicated as work with correspondents required a lot of time and energy. Folklorists themselves were not sure how and what to collect in the new political situation although they still had to instruct others how to collect. (See article I.)

During the first museological conference where collective expeditions were called for, collective work was seen as ideal for correspondents as well. New topics of folklore studies also increased the need for correspondents from towns and industrial settlements.²⁸ While the collective expeditions did become a reality, collective work among the correspondents was never a functioning practice. In 1951, it was stated that the 1948 conference resolutions had been fulfilled, for example the plan to have one correspondent per municipality failed: there were not enough correspondents.²⁹

The work of volunteer correspondents was evaluated by the folklorists. During the second museological conference, in October 1948, it was decided to have an expert committee in every museum to evaluate the incoming material.³⁰ Folklore was already internally evaluated in the accession files, where all incoming material was registered. Here folklorists would not only note the date, place of origin, genre, and amount of material, but also gave grades to the texts that either described them as satisfactory, good, or very good. However, not all materials were evaluated in this way: as well as folklore collected by other professional folklorists that was not graded, it seems that genres that were not valued highly at the time and were left without assessment. For example, poems for poesy albums or some newer folk songs were not evaluated. Interestingly, the many texts of Soviet folklore in the 1940s was mainly left without an

²⁶ EKM, n 1, s 112, l 16.

²⁷ EKM, n 1, s 116, l 45–46.

²⁸ EKM, n 1, s 112.

²⁹ RA, ERA.R-2345.1.90, pag 18.

³⁰ EKM, n 1, s 120, l 52.

assessment. The commentary on incoming archive materials reflects the understanding that the folklorists had of 'good folklore': it was oral, in a good dialect, from a rural area and carefully noted. New Soviet folklore did not fit these criteria. At the same time folklorists were careful enough not to give a negative assessment to politically valuable materials.

However, the pressure to collect Soviet folklore grew. The expert committee that evaluated incoming folklore was also entitled to give monetary awards for the best folklore material. Paying for folklore was a controversial issue in Estonian folkloristics, where it was deplored. Although folklore that was rewarded with money was seen as inauthentic, several folklorists had actually paid their informants. (Kalkun 2011: 144–146) The monetary awards were relatively generous: for very good material the award was three roubles per page, making folklore collecting a considerable source of extra income. Since 1949 Soviet folklore had received higher assessments than in previous years. However, the topic itself was not enough to place the texts sent by volunteer correspondents in the highest category, for example several Soviet songs were categorised as good, but not very good. While Soviet folklore was highly valued, the classical genres of folklore continued to receive good assessments. Parallel to Soviet folklore, carefully documented rural and oral culture was something that folklorists from the Folklore Department wanted in their collections and they motivated their informants to collect it.

Folklore, once archived, could reach people in the form of folklore publications or it could be read at the archives. Publishing folklore texts and studies based on folklore was a slow process during the Soviet period. While theoretically everybody was welcome to visit the Folklore Department to use the collections, the primary usergroups at the time were researchers and students, although writers and musicians also used the folklore collections. (Haberman 1961: 25) For example in 1949 writer Aadu Hint visited the Department of Folklore to read folk songs about the revolution of 1905, and poet Debora Vaarandi was interested in folk songs about the Great Patriotic War. They, as all other users of the archives, noted their name, date, the material they used and the goal of using them in the guest book. The records of archive users reflect their research interests and their reasons for visiting the archives. Especially in the first years of Soviet Estonia the interests of archive users were usually described by listing the genres of interest only. Soviet folklore was a rather marginal topic for most archive users. While in the 1940s there were only a few cases of people asking for Soviet folklore per year, between 1950 and 1953 there were up to ten cases per year of archive users working explicitly on this topic. Among others, students started to use Soviet folklore for their course papers. All in all, Soviet folklore was specifically requested on less than 3% of occasions even in the ideologically strictest Stalinist period in the 1950s.

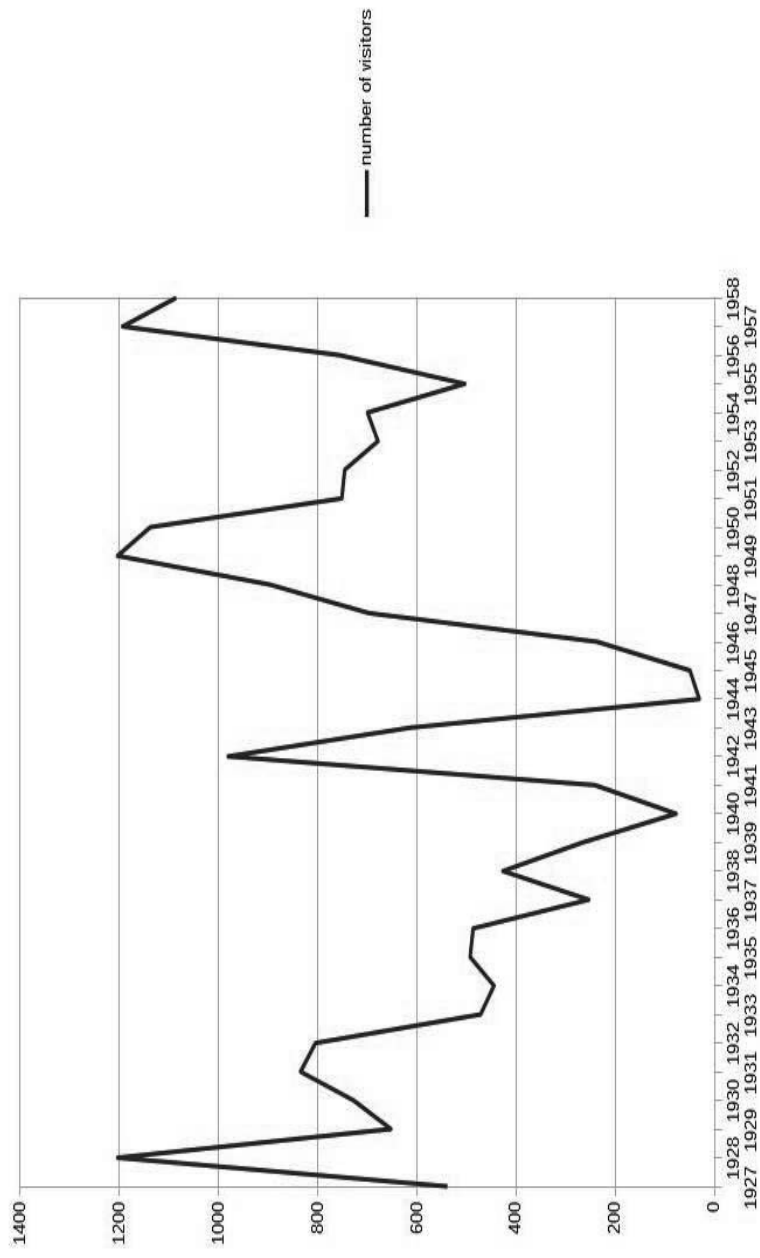


Figure 1. Users of the Estonian Folklore Archives and Folklore Department of the State Literary Museum in the 1927–1958 period according to the guest books.

As seen in the figure 1, there were more users of the Folklore Department per year from 1948 onwards than visitors to the Estonian Folklore Archives in the 1930s. The larger numbers could have several reasons. First, the division between the Folklore Department of the State Literary Museum and the ILL's Folklore Sector meant that folklorists from the Folklore Sector were regular visitors to the Folklore Department because they needed access to older folklore collections. Second, the practice of letting every participant in guided tours add their names to the guestbook. But at the same time, the large number of archive users also shows the importance that the folklore collections had in early Soviet Estonia: researchers, students, schoolteachers, journalists and other users found their way to the Folklore Department to understand the culture and people of the land.

Regina Bendix states that in some cases, the metaculture of an archive, which is the result of interaction between users, archival materials and archivists might predominate over its official purpose as an archive. (Bendix 2015: 147) How archives are perceived by users depends on the availability of material, the space where the archives are located, and, foremost, the people working there. Older Estonian folklore collections remained in the same house where they were before the Soviet occupation and indexing systems remained constant: for users, the archive experience was not so different from that of the interwar period. During the Stalinist period archive staff were largely educated in the Estonian Republic. As uncensored materials were sometimes given to users,³¹ it also seems that archival culture did not change with the official understanding of the goals of the Folklore Department.

Different sources show that Soviet folklore that was valued according to conference resolutions, was rather marginal in the research interests of archive users. Soviet folklore was searched for, but folklorists and volunteer correspondents alike had difficulties finding songs, tales and sayings that would describe life in collective farms or factories, or the Great Patriotic War, in a positive, ideologically suitable way. The folklorists themselves continued to value classical genres of folklore even in the years when presentation of Soviet folklore was expected by Soviet colleagues. The collective form of folklore collecting through large expeditions did change the ways in which folklore was documented, but did not bring a qualitatively new level of folklore collecting. It was common practice to visit older people although this was done in a way that brought texts with little context. Although workers' lore and folklore of the urban population were mentioned as new research areas for folklorists in the conference resolutions of 1948, most of the expeditions took place in rural areas. Thus, folklorists in early Soviet Estonia followed the suggestions of Soviet colleagues to collect Soviet folklore and conduct collective expeditions. The Soviet research paradigm was superficially accepted, but the practices of documenting and studying folklore show that only the most notable elements of Soviet folkloristics were adopted, and then only in imitation, while the main

³¹ EKM, n 1, s 70, l 26.

focus of collectors, staff and users of the folklore collections of the Folklore Department of the State Literary Museum was in the classic genres of folklore in the rural environment.

SUMMARIES OF THE PUBLISHED ARTICLES

The dissertation includes four articles published between 2013 and 2021, the long period meaning that my research perspectives have changed over the years. I chose not to present the articles chronologically. Instead, the first two articles outline the basics of folklore research, the second two depict more specific issues.

The first two articles give a very general overview of Soviet folkloristics in Estonia and describe archival practices with a focus on the State Literary Museum's Folklore Department: what kind of folklore was censored and how were the archives used and evaluated? Censoring the folklore materials showed how intertwined folklore and politics were in the Soviet Union.

In the third article, I describe folkloristic work in another institution, Tartu State University. There is a vast difference between the statements that the students learned, and their fieldwork and research practices. No thesis was written about Soviet folklore because during their practical work the students preferred other topics. Lastly, in the fourth article, I compare the developments in folkloristics in Soviet Estonia and the German Democratic Republic. Both countries were Sovietised and researchers had to search for suitable ways to study folklore. I use postcolonial theories to understand the strategies that they pursued.

Article I

Kulasalu, Kaisa 2017. From the Estonian Folklore Archives to the Folklore Department of the State Literary Museum: Sovietisation of Folkloristics in Late Stalinist Estonia. – *Mapping the History of Folklore Studies: Centres, Borderlands and Shared Spaces*. Edited by Sandis Laime, Dace Bula. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, pp. 132–153.

The publication gives a general overview of the sovietisation of Estonian folkloristics: how the meaning of 'folk' changed, how folkloristics was re-evaluated and how Soviet folklore was sought. The text focuses on work with folklore collections and shows the intermingling of theory and practice. Memory institutions represent ideologies that shape the choices of collections on what is displayed and researched, and how. The content of folklore collections was controlled to create a discourse that would be in accordance with the ideology of the Soviet Union. I will focus on the years 1944–1956, i.e. the period of Late Stalinism, and look at the work of the Department of Folklore of the State Literary Museum.

The institution under scrutiny was founded in 1927 as the Estonian Folklore Archives, where previous folklore collections from the late 19th and early 20th centuries had accumulated. From the late 19th century, documenting folklore was a nationwide endeavour that helped consolidate Estonian national identity. During the period of romantic nationalism, folklore was understood as the cultural expression of ethnic Estonians in a country governed by others. Esto-

nians were not only an ethnic group, but at the same time formed the lower social classes. As social and national borders collided, it was possible to show Estonian folklore as the lore of the lower social classes, or that of the working people, allowing a re-evaluation of earlier folklore collections. Older folklore was shown through a new perspective: for example, folklore about conflict with Baltic German landlords was seen as an example of class struggle. Soviet authorities underlined the importance of folklore and folkloristics and folklorists were expected to create a discourse of Soviet-themed oral tradition. In addition, they were to research older collections using a Marxist–Leninist perspective.

During the Stalinist period, the folklore collections and indexes were censored and earlier researchers such as Oskar Loo were condemned. But there was a lack of incoming folklore on Soviet topics like class struggle and the benefits of collective farms or revolutions. Singers from the Setomaa area in south-eastern Estonia used their improvisational skills to depict Soviet topics, but their traditional poetic formulas were sometimes ideologically incorrect. Collective methods of folklore collecting and new questionnaires were intended to shape the methods of documenting folklore and the topics of archived materials. However, ideologically appropriate folklore that depicted the changes in the positive way was scarce. In addition, the network of volunteer correspondents was much smaller than before the Second World War, with members of the network tending also to avoid Soviet folklore. Folklorists gave instructions to volunteer correspondents, but they also participated as advisers in amateur cultural activities.

The Soviet period was also a time when folk culture went through several changes. Due to the ideological restrictions on folklore collecting, not all the changes could be truthfully documented. For example, in the 1950s informants would deny celebrating Christmas as it was a Christian holiday. Only after the Soviet period, from the 1990s onwards, was it possible to document the vivid descriptions of secretly celebrated Christmas.

The questions that informants were asked, public rhetoric about folklore, and publications shaped the understanding of the nature of folklore and folklore studies. The meaning of folklore and folkloristics in the public discourse changed during the early Soviet period, but the discipline itself continued to exist.

Article II

Kulasalu, Kaisa 2013. Immoral Obscenity: Censorship of Folklore Manuscript Collections in Late Stalinist Estonia. – *Journal of Ethnology and Folkloristics*, Vol 7 (1), pp. 49–64.

One of the most notable ways that the new political system manifested itself in the field of folkloristics in early Soviet Estonia was censorship of the folklore collections. Between 1945 and 1952, the folklore collections were checked and their contents censored. This happened in two waves: firstly in 1945–1946 and secondly in 1950–1952. The first wave focused on political censorship of, for

example, the names of national figures, political jokes and other potentially anti-Soviet material. The next wave was moral censorship and entailed removing all kinds of obscenity, either in the form of bawdy words or allegories. The article focuses on the second wave of censorship, explaining the process of censorship and discussing the reasons why.

The People's Commissariat of Education Museum Sector sent instructions to extract anti-Soviet folklore from memory institutions in 1945. Folklore collections had a particular content, so the criteria for censorship of other archives was insufficient. Instead of only using formal criteria, texts were read to proof their content. The thorough censorship of collections at the State Literary Museum Folklore Department was generally conducted by members of staff. Most of the Folklore Department's folklore collections were checked for politically unsuitable texts, only the oldest manuscript collections were omitted. Folklore texts were either censored by being redacted with ink, having paper glued over the page or pages were cut out.

The second wave of censorship started in 1950, the year of the 8th Plenum of the Central Committee of the Estonian Communist Party, or the March Plenum, when several political leaders were replaced and political pressure on cultural institutions intensified. In addition to the leaders of the party about 400 researchers, authors, artists and musicians were repressed and accused of nationalism and formalism. During this period, staff members of the State Literary Museum's Folklore Department read the manuscript collections once again to find obscenities. This was more time-consuming compared to the search for the names of political enemies. The work was slower than expected and by the end of 1951 the board of the Literary Museum agreed that censoring original manuscripts should cease. Only the typewritten copies were systematically checked thereafter. In addition, the collections of the Institute of Language and Literature Folklore Sector (founded in 1948) were censored.

In the Stalinist Soviet Union, political and moral spheres were tightly intertwined, therefore the censorship of obscene material had a political dimension. Controlling archives did not mean controlling folklore, but rather controlling the representations of folklore in different contexts as well as the possible new interpretations of folklore.

Article III

Langer, Kaisa 2021. Becoming a Folklorist in Early Soviet Estonia: Learning the Rhetoric of Socialist Research. – *Cultural Analysis*, Vol 19 (2), pp. 6–33.

Higher education in folkloristics was possible at the University of Tartu from 1918, and folkloristic education continued at Tartu State University during the Soviet period. Between 1945 and 1955, 25 diploma theses were written on the topic of folklore. Studying folkloristics in Tartu State University was a very different experience from the pre-war Tartu University. The students had to take certain courses in a certain order, attendance was compulsory, there were classes

in Marxism–Leninism. Independent work and classroom discussion were rare due to ideological constraints. Nevertheless, Eduard Laugaste taught many generations of students about Estonian and international folklore and folkloristics. Although the advantages of Soviet theories were emphasised, the topics that the students chose for their theses show that they preferred subjects that had less to do with Soviet ideology. The prizes given in the competition for student research show that university staff were also not insistent on ideologically flawless work. The Marxist–Leninist quotes that were presented in student research papers were often only vaguely related to the content of the project, although they gave the necessary ideological context to the writing.

The clearest example of the clash between Soviet rhetoric and student practice were the students' fieldwork experiences. They tried to frame their experience in a positive tone by including statements about Soviet progress. Nevertheless, they struggled to find folklore about Soviet topics, instead often looking for elderly people as informants and getting excited about the traditional elements of rural culture. In order to become a professional folklorist, one needed to adapt more to the Soviet system. The dissertations written in the Stalinist years focused on classical genres of folklore and showed how social struggle was reflected in such texts.

The Soviet period brought no new epistemological basis for research. Rather, it taught the (young) folklorists to frame their research in an ideologically suitable way. At the same time, these strategies conserved research: instead of looking for innovation, scholars continued using older methods of research, masked in a Soviet veil.

Article IV

Langer, Kaisa 2021. Dealing with Soviet Colonialism: Folklore Studies in Early Soviet Estonia and East Germany. – *Socialist in Form, National in Content: Folklore and Ethnography in the Soviet Western Borderlands*. Edited by Toms Kencis. Lanham: Lexington Books (forthcoming).

The text compares the sovietisation of folkloristics in early Soviet Estonia and the German Democratic Republic (until 1949 the Soviet Occupation Zone). The comparison shows the different possibilities in coping with similar regulations and ideological agenda. I describe the ways new goals of folkloristics were communicated, the changes in the institutional network and teaching, and the public role of folklore studies, especially in amateur arts. The article uses post-colonial theory because it has several advantages in describing the process of adapting a new research paradigm to the new political regimes of the countries bordering the Soviet Union.

Both Estonia and Germany went through several political changes in the first half of the 20th century. After World War Two, East Germany was in the Soviet sphere of influence and Estonia was occupied by the Soviet Union. The eco-

nomic and political systems were reformed according to the Soviet model: in both countries, the first years after World War Two were more liberal, while the late 1940s and early 1950s were a period of severe political pressure.

Folkloristics had been connected with romantic nationalism and was largely a study of peasants in Estonia, just as in Germany. In the Soviet republic, however, national aspects of folkloristics were condemned. Folklore was expected to help build a socialist society and depict Soviet progress. In East Germany, folkloristics was in a rather marginal position after the war, although Wolfgang Steinitz managed to emphasise the importance of the field. Folklorists in Soviet Estonia and East Germany were expected to support amateur arts and to analyse previously understudied social groups. However, researchers struggled to find a suitable approach to study workers or collective farms. While the research questions changed, the research objects remained the same, i.e. studies mainly discussed peasants from the historical perspective. As folkloristics was not political enough for the content of amateur arts, its importance diminished. Researchers in both countries learned Marxist parlance. Despite assertions about the importance of the field because it studied the Soviet people, in both countries folkloristics became a relatively narrow academic discipline that generally functioned as a mimicry of Soviet research.

Amateur arts were an area where folklore and cultural politics could fit together, and folklorists had the chance to demonstrate their usefulness in the colonial cultural system of Soviet Estonia and the GDR. The definitions of folk art in the GDR were wider than in Soviet Estonia, but in both countries folklore publications and folklorist advisers helped shape the repertoire of amateur groups. The previous models of amateur cultural activities were restructured and new hybrid forms of creative expression were sought to make Soviet and local models meet. This was especially true of folk dance, in which hybrid forms that represented Soviet aesthetics were created. However, the direct involvement of folkloristics in amateur arts ended during the period of mature socialism and many folklorists distanced themselves from staged folklore. In both countries, folkloristics had an ambivalent position because it adapted to the Soviet models, although only as little as was necessary.

SUMMARY AND FURTHER RESEARCH PERSPECTIVES

Somewhat counterintuitively instead of condemning national cultures the Soviet Union supported ethnic aspects of culture. Folklore had previously been associated with romantic nationalism; in contrast, research into folk culture in the Soviet Union was re-evaluated and based on the new, Marxist–Leninist theory. Grave changes in the methods and subject matter of folkloristics took place in the Stalinist period and can be summarised through the concept of Stalinist folkloristics. Despite ideological restrictions, folklore was still documented, studied, and published in early Soviet Estonia. During the Stalinist years, folklorists tried to rethink folklore as the creative expression of the working people, instead of ethnic groups.

Estonian folkloristics went through several changes in the first years of Soviet occupation. Firstly, in Soviet Estonia institutions that dealt with documenting and studying folklore were restructured. The tasks of folklorists in different institutions were supposed to be different: while Tartu State University educated young folklorists and the Folklore Department of the State Literary Museum offered a research base with its archives, the folklorists of a new Soviet institution – the Institute of Language and Literature Folklore Sector – were supposed to carry out academic research on folklore. In reality, the tasks were never clearly assigned so documentation, archiving and research took place at all three institutions.

Secondly, the topics and methods of research changed. Folklorists were expected to find examples of Soviet folklore, i.e. texts that depicted Soviet topics such as the Great Patriotic War, life on collective farms, workers' lore, etc., in a positive way. Older folklore collections were studied to find examples of class struggle in Estonian villages before the Soviet period. In addition, methods of collecting folklore changed with collective expeditions becoming the common way to document folklore. Volunteer correspondents were instructed to document new topics. However, Soviet folklore was hard to find, and generally the interviewees were still older people in rural areas. Archival practices show that folklorists and users of collections alike rather valued the classical genres of folklore. No publication on Soviet folklore was compiled in the early Soviet Union as there was not enough suitable material.

Third, the previous work of folklorists and the content of folklore collections was re-evaluated. Censorship of folklore collections during the Stalinist period showed that the large task of controlling the morale of the people by removing obscene texts from folklore collections was impractical. Not only was censoring the collections time-consuming, but also understanding of what was ideologically unproblematic folklore for a Soviet country could change over time. Folklorists were expected to re-evaluate their previous work and use new Marxist–Leninist perspective in their research, but the changes mainly took place only in the rhetoric of the writing.

Not only the older folklorists, but also the students in Stalinist Estonia were less interested in Soviet folklore and more in the classical genres. This was also the case in folklore studies in East Germany, where folklorists changed their research perspective and research questions instead of objects: despite some attempts to study other social groups, folkloristics remained the study of peasant culture. Folklorists in East Germany and in Soviet Estonia were also included in the field of amateur arts, although here the collaboration was often difficult.

Folklore collections and fieldwork diaries offer a picture of the struggle that folklorists went through to find Soviet folklore. The discussion protocols of the three folkloristic institutions – the Folklore Department of the State Literary Museum, the Institute of Language and Literature Folklore Sector and the Department of Folklore of Tartu State University – reflect the difficulties of adapting to the new ideological situation. In comparison to the sources that depict the working processes of folklorists, the texts meant for the public or for the other Soviet folklorists show the success of folklore studies in the new political situation. Comparing sources that were meant for the public with the more internal materials allows us to see the working practices of folklorists, the ideological agenda they dealt with and the choices they made.

The whole field of folklore studies in Soviet Estonia as well as in East Central Europe had to adapt to the new ideological requirements during the early Soviet period of 1944-1956. People involved in the field in Soviet Estonia learned the new parlance rather quickly, although research practices and the tone of several field notes reflects the desire to continue the pre-Soviet ways of doing folkloristics. The folklorists valued relics of peasant folk culture, which they saw as about to disappear, and so searched for authenticity and poetic language even when they were formally expected to find texts that depicted the prosperity of Soviet life.

The main conclusion of the thesis is that the work of folklorists in early Soviet Estonia was a hybrid act that brought together pre-Soviet methods of studying folklore and information about the new requirements that they received at All-Union conferences. By using a postcolonial perspective I claim that what began as mimicry of Soviet research in writings and in the speeches of folklorists, where only suitable citations could connect relatively neutral research with the Soviet framework, developed into a system of studying folklore in which different values combined into a careful way of doing research. There were fields of study in which Soviet and pre-Soviet values collided, which thankfully became niches for research. However, this endless search for fields of study that would fit both worlds brought relatively few possibilities to pursue wider research interests.

My dissertation covers developments in folklore studies in one country over a relatively short period. There are several possible ways to go on with this research. More international comparisons would allow a better understanding of the mechanisms of coping with similar restrictions in research, as well as revealing different models of sovietisation. The abundance of archival material would also allow several other approaches to the folkloristics of Soviet Estonia,

for example it would be possible to focus on certain folklorists or informants, events, or ideas. Not only could the richness of the materials help, but also the perspectives of the postcolonial approach would be useful in understanding the folklore and culture of Soviet Estonia in an enriching way.

The Stalinist period in Estonia has been studied relatively thoroughly. However, the choices made by researchers during mature socialism are an interesting field of study. The political pressure and fear of repression diminished, although the need to fit the system and use suitable parlance remained. The university education of folklorists in Soviet Estonia seemed to strengthen some aspects of the 'traditional' pre-war art of research, although the question of whether teaching students to quote the right authors changed over the forty years after Stalin's death remains unanswered.

Work on history of folkloristics helps us understand the premises that researchers work on today, for example their research interests and the topics they choose to avoid and the biases they have. It also helps us understand the contents of the folklore archives – the wide variety of materials that are often understandable only when one has enough contextual information. Folklore archives reflect vernacular cultural phenomena that are not homogenous. As the attempts of the early Soviet folklorists to show folklore in a politically suitable way illustrate, folklore, in both archived and non-archived forms, is too diverse to be bent to just one interpretational framework. Rather, it is always necessary to reinterpret the content of folklore collections, and, for that matter, to know them well.

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KKI – the folklore collection of the Institute of Language and Literature in the Estonian Folklore Archives.
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SUMMARY IN ESTONIAN

Eesti rahvaluulekogud hilisstalinistliku folkloristika kontekstis

Kuidas uurida rahvakultuuri värskest okupeeritud riigis? Nõukogude Liit okupeeris Eesti 1940. aastal, pärast kolmeaastast saksa okupatsiooni jätkus Nõukogude okupatsioon 1944. aastal. Folkloristid kohanesid uute oludega ning otsisid viise, kuidas erialast tööd jätkata. Neilt oodati senise töö ümberhindamist, rahvaluulekogude tsenseerimist, nõukogude rahvaluule kogumist ning uurimistöö alusena marksismi-leninismi klassikute kasutamist. Sellise lähenemise saab kokku võtta stalinistliku folkloristika mõiste kaudu, mis tähistab Nõukogude Liidus 1930. aastate esimesest poolest kuni stalinistliku perioodi lõpuni käibinud arusaama, mille kohaselt rahvaluuleteadlaste töö on aidata kaasa nõukogude ühiskonna ehitamisele uuelaadse rahvaluule kogumise, uurimise ja avaldamise ning senise rahvaluule(teaduse) ümberhindamise kaudu. Sõjaeelse haridusega folkloristid õppisid tundma uusi allikaid ning üritasid leida rahvaluulet, mis kujutaks nõukogude korrale omaseid teemasid positiivses võtmes. Säärastel teemadel kogutud rahvaluulet tutvustasid Eesti Nõukogude folkloristid üleliidulistel konverentsidel ning mainisid seda ajakirjanduses kui nõukogudeaegse rahvaluuleteaduse õitsengu näitajat. Kuigi (enese)tsensuur mõjutas kõigi nõukogudeaegsete tekstide loomist, on allikaid võrreldes võimalik näha, kui keeruline oli nõukogude folkloori leida ning kuidas folkloristid eelistasid klassikalisi rahvaluule žanre. Varasema folkloorikäsitluse ning klassikaliste folkloorivormide eelistus paistis silma ka rahvaluuletudengite töödes.

Dissertatsiooni allikaks on esiteks varasel nõukogude perioodil (aastatel 1944–1956) kogutud ja Eesti rahvaluuleinstitutsioonides arhiveeritud rahvaluule, teiseks rahvaluulega tegelenud asutuste tegevust kirjeldanud materjalid nagu protokollid, tööplaanid ja aruanded, kolmandaks rahvaluule kohta avaldatud materjalid. Mõistagi on nendesse allikatesse vaja läheneda allikakriitiliselt: kõrvutav lugemine näitas, kui ettevaatlikud olid folkloristid avalikkusele oma eriala edusamme esitledes, kui samal ajal igapäevane töö neid edusamme nõukogudelikus tõlgendamises vähe kaasa tõi. Üheks peamiseks uurimismeetodiks ongi uurimispraktikate ja avalikkusele mõeldud tekstide võrdlus, mis nõukogude aja uuringutes ka teiste uurijate jaoks (nt Howell 1992: 25) viljakaks lähenemiseks on osutunud.

Teoreetilisel tasandil on mind inspireerinud hiljutised postkolonialistlikud lähenemised sotsialistliku kultuuri uurimisele (Albrecht 2019, Annus 2018; Annus 2019). Kuigi juriidiliselt oli tegu okupatsiooniga, aitab just koloniaalkultuuri uurimise mõistestik mõtestada tollases ühiskonnas elanud inimeste toimetulekumehhanisme. Vastupanust või mugandumisest rääkimise asemel jälgin, kuidas erinevas olukorras võeti omaks koloniseeritu roll ja kasutati nõukogulikku väljenduslaadi kui mimikrit. Veel enamgi: tekkisid hübriidsed kultuurivormid, mis kombineerisid nõukogude norme ja ennesõjaaegse Eesti

Vabariigi kultuurivorme. Esimesi toetas ametlik kultuuripoliitika, teistega seostus igatsus varasemate uurimisperspektiivide ja -võimaluste järele.³²

Esiteks toimusid institutsionaalsed ümberkorraldused. Uute institutsioonidenaloodi Riiklik Kirjandusmuuseum (1940) ja Keele ja Kirjanduse Instituut (1947). Senisest Eesti Rahvaluule Arhiivist sai Riikliku Kirjandusmuuseumi rahvaluule osakond. Uus rahvaluule kogumise ja uurimisega tegutsev asutus oli Keele ja Kirjanduse Instituudi rahvaluule sektor. Tartu Ülikoolist sai Tartu Riiklik Ülikool, endine eesti ja võrdleva rahvaluule õppetool ühendati 1947. kirjanduse kateedriga. Kõigil kolmel asutusel oli oma rahvaluulekogu. Suur osa aruteludest olid asutustevahelised, kuhu kaasati kõigi institutsioonide folkloristid. Eriti Kirjandusmuuseumi ja KKI folkloristide vahel töö jaotamine oli keeruline, kuna mõlema asutuse plaanides oli kogumine, korraldamine ja uurimistöö. Korduvalt püüti rahvaluule osakonnast kujundada vaid uurijate tööd toetav, dokumenteerimisele ja süstematiseerimisele keskendunud asutus, kuid siiski jäi uurimistöö ka Kirjandusmuuseumi folkloristide töö osaks. Kuna KKI asus 1952. aastast alates Tallinnas, kuid nende enda rahvaluulekogud olid veel väikesed, pidid sealsed töötajad reisima Tartusse, et kasutada rahvaluule osakonna kogusid. Niisiis olid rahvaluulega tegelevad asutused omavahel tihedalt seotud ning nende ülesanded olid osaliselt kattuvad.

Muutusi ka rahvaluule kogumise meetodid. 1948. aastal toimus muuseumialane konverents, kus otsustati edaspidi rahvaluulet talletada kollektiivsete ekspeditsioonide vormis. Sellised ekspeditsioonid, mis tihti kaasasid mitmete asutuste töötajaid, olid üheks keskseks rahvaluule dokumenteerimise viisiks nõukogude perioodil. Intervjuud viidi siiski läbi üksi või paaridena, ekspeditsioonil toimusid koosolekud ühiste eesmärkide saavutamiseks ja töö koordineerimiseks. Ka nõukogude perioodil oli suur osa arhiveeritud rahvaluulest kogutud vabatahtlike korrespondentide poolt. Neid pidid folkloristid juhendama uute teemade osas.

Nimelt tõi nõukogude periood rahvaluule alal uusi uurimisalasid: senisest intensiivsemalt üritasid folkloristid dokumenteerida revolutsioonidesse ja töölistesse puutuvat, uute teemadena lisandusid Suure Isamaasõja folkloor ja kolhooside rahvaluule. Säärastel teemadel kogutud rahvaluule pidi kujutama nõukogude korra eeliseid. Nõukogude folkloori oli aga raske leida, nii jõudis rahvaluulekogudesse mitmesugust materjali, mis teemadelt sobiv, kuid oli vormilt sageli mittefolkloorne. Vanema rahvaluule publitseerimisel ja analüüsil avasid folkloristid seda klassivõitluse ja sotsiaalsete vastuolude perspektiivist. Ka värskes Nõukogude Eestis kogutud rahvaluulest moodustavad aga suurema osa klassikalised folkloorižanrid, mitte nõukogude folkloor. Huvi klassikalise folkloori vastu polnud mitte ainult ennesõjaaegse haridusega folkloristidel, vaid ka vabatahtlikel korrespondentidel ja nõukogude ülikoolis haritud tudengitel. Ka rahvaluulekogude kasutamise statistika näitab vähest huvi nõukogude folkloori vastu.

³² Eesti Vabariigi suhtes väljendatud nostalgia osas vt ka Kõresaar 2004.

Nõukogude Eestis ei ilmunud ühtegi ainult nõukogude folkloorile kesken-
dunud publikatsiooni. Siiski jätsid ajakirjanduses ilmunud artiklid mulje rahva-
luule õitsengust nõukogude korra tingimustes. Üleliidulistel etnoloogia ja
folkloristika alastel konverentsidel esitlesid eesti rahvaluuleteadlased nõukogu-
de teemal kogutud materjale – seda oodati neilt ning selliseid ootuseid kom-
munikeeriti just säärastel üritustel. Eesti rahvaluuleteadlased õppisid tundma
vene nõukogude teadlaste töid ja neid tsiteerima. Publitseeritud tekstide põhjal
paistab, et eesti folkloristika oli kiiresti ja edukalt muutunud üheks nõukogude
folkloristika haruks, tegelikest tööpraktikates tooni andnud raskused uute nõud-
mistega kohanemisel paistavad näitavad aga seda, et nõukogudeliku lähenemise
edu oli vaid retooriliseks fassaadiks.

Väidan, et folkloristika oli varases Nõukogude Eestis hübriidne praktika, kus
uurimisteede valimisel otsustasid uurijad kombineerida sõjaeelse arusaama
rahvaluulest ning nõukogude folkloristika eeskujud. Nii sobis uurimistöö mingil
määral mõlema ideoloogiaga, aga täielikult mitte kummagagi neist. Uus hüb-
riidne rahvaluuleteadus sündis just sellise poliitilise olukorra tulemusena –
küpse sotsialismi perioodil loodud ideoloogiliselt neutraalse tooniga mahukad
allikapublikatsioonid on just kahe uurimisparadigma vahelise tasakaalu otsimise
tunnuseks. Eesti folkloristid õppisid imiteerima nõukogude retoorikat, kirjel-
dades edusamme rahvaluule kogumisel ja uurimisel. Rahvaluulematerjalide,
välitöömärkmete ja protokollide analüüs näitab aga, et neil oli raske leida selli-
seid materjale, mida avalikkusele ja nõukogude kolleegidele eesti nõukogude
uue ja progressiivse rahvaluulena esitleda.

Väitekirjaga koosneb sissejuhatuses ja neljast inglisekeelsest artiklist, mis
tutvustavad folkloristika eri tahke varajases Nõukogude Eestis. Sissejuhatuses
alguses tutvustan nõukogude folkloristika uurimislugu, töö teoreetilist raamis-
tikku, meetodeid ja allikaid. Teises osas annan ülevaate teaduse, eriti folkloris-
tika arengust Nõukogude Liidus, analüüsin nõukogude folkloori mõistet ja
kirjeldan rahvaluuleteaduse sovietiseerimist nõukogude Eestis, eraldi käsitle-
n kolme rahvaluule kogumise ja uurimisega tegelenud asutust. Lisaks tutvustan
ebakõlasid ametlikult kõrgelt väärtustatud nõukogude rahvaluule ja selle doku-
menteerimise, hindamise ja kasutatavuse vahel. Kõrvutan ka varajase nõu-
kogude Eesti arenguid Ida-Saksamaa folkloristikaga, et näha, milliseid meeto-
deid marksismi-leninismi teooria ning Nõukogude kolleegide ootustega kohane-
miseks kasutati. Seejärel esitan artiklite kokkuvõtte, millele järgneb dissertat-
siooni üldine kokkuvõte, milles võtan kokku artiklite järeldused ning tutvustan
laiemaid eesti nõukogude folkloristikaga seotud uurimisperspektiive. Järgnevalt
esitan lühidalt doktoritöö osaks olnud artiklite põhijäreldused.

Artikkel I

Kulasalu, Kaisa 2017. From the Estonian Folklore Archives to the Folklore
Department of the State Literary Museum: Sovietisation of Folkloristics in Late
Stalinist Estonia. – *Mapping the History of Folklore Studies: Centres, Border-*

lands and Shared Spaces. Edited by Sandis Laime, Dace Bula. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, pp. 132–153.

Esimeses artiklis (eestikeelne pealkiri „Eesti Rahvaluule Arhiivist Riikliku Kirjandusmuuseumi rahvaluule osakonnani: folkloristika sovietsiseerimine hilis-stalinistlikus Eestis”) käsitletlen Eesti folkloristika sovietsiseerimist vahetult pärast Teist maailmasõda. Ühe keskse rahvaluulearhiivi asemel oli Nõukogude Eestis kolm institusiooni, mis rahvaluule dokumenteerimise, säilitamise ja uurimisega tegelesid. Varasemate folkloristide töö hinnati ümber, enne nõukogude aega kogutud rahvaluule kontrolliti ja tsenseeriti. Ametlikul tasemel muutus folkloristide uurimisobjekt: rahvas ei olnud uurimisel rahvuse, vaid sotsiaalse klassi tasemel. Kuna 19. sajandil tähendas eesti rahvus suuresti ka madalamat sotsiaalset klassi, oli ajaloolise folkloori uurimisel võimalik seda lihtsasti tõlgendada kui töötava klassi loomingut. Folkloristidelt oodati nõukogude teemasid positiivselt kirjeldava rahvaluule talletamist. Arvukad repressioonid ja ümberkorraldused muutsid tol perioodil rahvakultuuri, kuid folkloristide huvi minevikus käibinud rahvaluule vastu ei kadunud. Kuigi ametliku retoorika kohaselt oli nõukogudeaegne folkloristika varasemast vägagi erinev, on uurijate töös siiski näha järjepidevust.

Artikkel II

Kulasalu, Kaisa 2013. Immoral Obscenity: Censorship of Folklore Manuscript Collections in Late Stalinist Estonia. – *Journal of Ethnology and Folkloristics*, Vol 7 (1), pp. 65–81.

Teises artiklis (eestikeelne pealkiri „Ebamoraalne rõvedus: rahvaluulekogude tsenseerimine hilis-stalinistlikus Eestis”) tutvustan 1940.–1950. aastatel toimunud eesti rahvaluulekogude tsenseerimist. 1945.–1946. aastal eraldati rahvaluulekogudest poliitiliselt ebasobivad materjalid, 1950. aastate alguses tsenseeriti mõningate poliitiliselt ebasobivate materjalide kõrval ka obstsöönised sõnad ja tekstid. See oli töömahukam kui esimene tsenseerimislaine ning töö jäi lõpetamata. Totalitaarsetele riikidele omaselt prooviti poliitilise võimu kaudu kontrollida rahva moraali, seda illustreerib ka ebasüüdsate materjalide eemaldamine riiklikust arhiivist.

Artikkel III

Langer, Kaisa 2021. Becoming a Folklorist in Early Soviet Estonia: Learning the Rhetoric of Socialist Research. – *Cultural Analysis*, Vol 19 (2), pp. 6–33.

Kolmas artikkel (eestikeelne pealkiri „Folkloristiks saamine varases Nõukogude Eestis: sotsialistliku teadustöö retoorikat õppimas”) kirjeldab Tartu Riiklikus Ülikooli folkloristika eriala ainekavasid, tudengite lõpu- ja auhinnatööde teemasid ning valikuid, mida and tegid välitööpraktikal. Kuigi ülikoolide õppe-

kavad ühtlustati üle Nõukogude Liidu ning ainekavad kirjeldasid nõukogude meetodite eeliseid, peegeldub üliõpilaste uurimishuvides eelkõige nende eelistus minevikulise rahvaluule osas. Ka välitööpraktikal rõõmustas neid eelkõige traditsioonilised teemad ning nõukogude rahvaluulet oli tudengitel sama raske hinnata kui nende informantidel. Nõukogude periood ei tähendanud uurimistöö ümberehitamist uuele epistemoloogilisele alusele, vaid kõigest muutunud retoorikat. Ka noored folkloristid omandasid oskuse oma tööd ideoloogiliselt sobival viisil presenteerida.

Artikkel IV

Langer, Kaisa 2021. How to Deal with Soviet Colonialism: Folklore Studies in Early Soviet Estonia and East Germany. – *Socialist in Form, National in Content: Folklore and Ethnography in the Soviet Western Borderlands*. Edited by Toms Kencis. Lanham: Lexington Books (forthcoming).

Neljanda artikli (eestikeelse pealkirjaga „Kuidas nõukogude kolonialismiga hakkama saada: folkloristika varases Nõukogude Eestis ja Ida-Saksamaal) peamiseks küsimuseks on postkolonialistliku lähenemise sobivus Teise maailmasõja järgse Nõukogude Eesti ja Ida-Saksamaa folkloristika analüüsimiseks. Artiklis kõrvutan valikuid, mida nende kahe riigi rahvakultuuri uurijad tegid, et kohaneda uue süsteemiga, jätkata selles oma karjääri ning kindlustada ka eriala püsimine uues ideoloogilises situatsioonis. Mõlemas riigis üritasid folkloristid kasutada uut retoorikat. Eriti Ida-Saksamaal oli näha, kuidas rahvaluulele poliitilise tähenduse omistamine aitas institutsionaalse võrgustiku loomisel. Rahvaluule oli harrastuskunsti allikaks, lavale toodud rahvatantsud ja -laulud olid hübrisvormid, kus kohtusid vanem rahvakultuur ning selle sotsialistlik interpretatsioon. Ametlikult muutusid rahvaluule uurimisküsimused, kuid uurimisobjektiks jäi siiski enamasti maaelanikud ajaloolisest perspektiivist, kuna tööliste või ühismajandite uurimiseks sobivate meetodite ja materjalide leidmine oli raske. Mõlemas riigis muutus rahvaluuleteadus vähetähtsaks minevikule keskendunud erialaks. Koloniaalses võimumaatriksis tegid uurijad valikuid, mis kindlustasid erialade järjepidevuse ning nende rahastuse jätkumise, kuid konserveerisid erialase arengu.

PUBLICATIONS

CURRICULUM VITAE

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List of selected publications:

- Langer, Kaisa (2021). Dealing with Soviet Colonialism: Folklore Studies in Early Soviet Estonia and East Germany. – *Socialist in Form, National in Content: Folklore and Ethnography in the Soviet Western Borderlands*. Edited by Toms Kencis. Lanham: Lexington Books (forthcoming).
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Langer, Kaisa (2021). Dealing with Soviet Colonialism: Folklore Studies in Early Soviet Estonia and East Germany. – *Socialist in Form, National in Content: Folklore and Ethnography in the Soviet Western Borderlands*. Edited by Toms Kencis. Lanham: Lexington Books (forthcoming).
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